

Interim Report Submission

Dear Justice Pepper and Panel Members,

Thank you once again for giving Territorians the opportunity to participate in the Fracking Inquiry.

Please find the script (with source links) for my Hearing presentation, and photos from the Katherine and Darwin Shows at the end of my submission (Appendix 1).

This submission to the Interim Report contains:

1. Suggestion for Panel
2. Suggestion for Panel recommendation
3. The absence of Social Licence and distrust of Government
4. Territorians want fracking banned

Appendix 1. Fracking Inquiry Hearing Presentation, including letter from Debbie Boakes.

Appendix 2. Links demonstrating the importance of fishing, farming and a clean green image.

1. Recommendation for Panel

I strenuously recommend that the Panel read the '*Compendium of Scientific, Medical, and Media Findings Demonstrating Risks and Harms of Fracking*' (2016), is a fully referenced compilation of the evidence outlining the risks and harms of fracking and brings together findings from the scientific and medical literature, government and industry reports, and journalistic investigation.

https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/tribunalonfracking/pages/42/attachments/original/1479593028/Compendium_4.0_Final_11-16-16.pdf?1479593028

2. Suggestion for Panel recommendation

Exploration permits are awarded for periods of 5 years which means that many are expiring now or about to expire soon. See references below:

Page 6 of 'energyNT|2015', lists the Titles, title holders and the dates the titles were awarded

https://dpir.nt.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/258916/2015_EnergyNT.pdf

Page 2 of 'Energy Titles & Fees', gives the terms of permits and licenses, including their duration

https://dpir.nt.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/267922/EnergyTitleFeesSummary.pdf

I suggest the Panel recommends that:

Permits and leases should not be renewed until fracking is deemed to be safe and acceptable by Territory communities. This will save the Government from buying back the leases when they listen to their constituents and ban fracking. I imagine not renewing permits would much cheaper than buying them back.

3. The absence of Social Licence and distrust of Government

The Australian Government commissioned Dr Rod Lamberts, from ANU's Australian National Centre for the Public Awareness of Science (CPAS), to conduct 'The Australian Beliefs and Attitudes Towards

Science Survey'. The survey interviewed 1,203 people about their views on fracking as well as other science-related matters, and found the majority of Australian respondents (70.7 per cent) are opposed to fracking. This is clearly demonstrated in Table Q10C on page 12 of 'The Australian Beliefs and Attitudes towards Science Survey: Data tables'.

<http://www.science.gov.au/community/Documents/DATA-Files-SCAPA172001-CPAS-poll.pdf>

The full report is available here:

Lamberts, R (2017) The Australian Beliefs and Attitudes Towards Science Survey. The Australian National University. Canberra, Australia

<http://www.science.gov.au/community/Documents/REPORT-SCAPA172001-CPAS-poll.pdf>

As I explained to the Panel during the Darwin hearings, shale gas extraction, all its associated activities, and the entire onshore gas industry (collectively referred to in this submission as 'fracking') does not have, nor will ever gain, social licence to operate in the Northern Territory (Appendix 1). Fracking comes with a myriad of risks and we consider any level of risk from fracking to be unacceptable.

The information regarding community surveys presented by Lauren Mellor, Vivian Sobek (Coomalie Region), Petrena Ariston (Katherine Region) and Glenys Somers (Mataranka Region) at the Katherine hearing on 9/8/17, also demonstrated the fact that fracking has no social licence in the NT.

Territorians are suspicious that our NT Government is using the NT Fracking Inquiry to justify their lifting the fracking moratorium, regardless of the outcome. They will be able to say they kept their election promise of a moratorium and inquiry and allow fracking despite the overwhelming opposition of their constituents. At the Katherine Show on Friday, **July 2017, I asked Labor cabinet members about banning fracking. They replied that they were waiting for the Inquiry findings, which is what they also say on the media. But Territorians know this to be false as the government continues to promote and encourage onshore gas investment. For example:

The inaugural *Barkly Regional Resources & Economic Development Conference 2017* (24-25 October 2017). It costs \$2195 to attend, so is not designed to attract local landholders, and its agenda lists:

- Overview and outlook for minerals and energy on the Barkly Region
- The vital role that gas – on-shore and off-shore – can play as one of the Territory's major growth sectors
- The Jemena's Northern Gas Pipeline – An update
- The Beetaloo Basin – The most prospective onshore basin for unconventional gas

View the Agenda here: <https://www.informa.com.au/event/barkly-regional-resources-economic-development-conference/#agenda>

NT Resources Week and SEAAOC Conference (15-17 August 2017, Darwin Convention Centre). It costs \$ 2,304.50 to attend and has a strong onshore gas focus. It's agenda includes:

- Northern Territory Ministerial Address Collaboration & building strong relationships, The Hon. Michael Gunner MLA, Chief Minister, Northern Territory
- The Case for Onshore Gas in the Territory, Session Chair Ashley Manicaros, Business Editor, Northern Territory News

View the Agenda here: <http://www.ntresourcesweek.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/21018-Infoma-NTRW-SEAAOC-P17R02.pdf>

The fact that government employees and those whose businesses are contracted to or reliant on government support are unable to publicly comment on fracking due to the fear of losing their jobs, contracts, or other income, also makes Territorians suspicious of our government’s motives. This makes Territorians who oppose fracking the silent majority (see Table 1) represented by an outspoken few, as Justice Pepper may have discovered in her conversation with the man who had to cancel his Darwin hearing presentation.

Territorians opposition to fracking is further silenced by media such as the NT News, which rarely prints any anti-fracking news articles or Letters to the Editor.

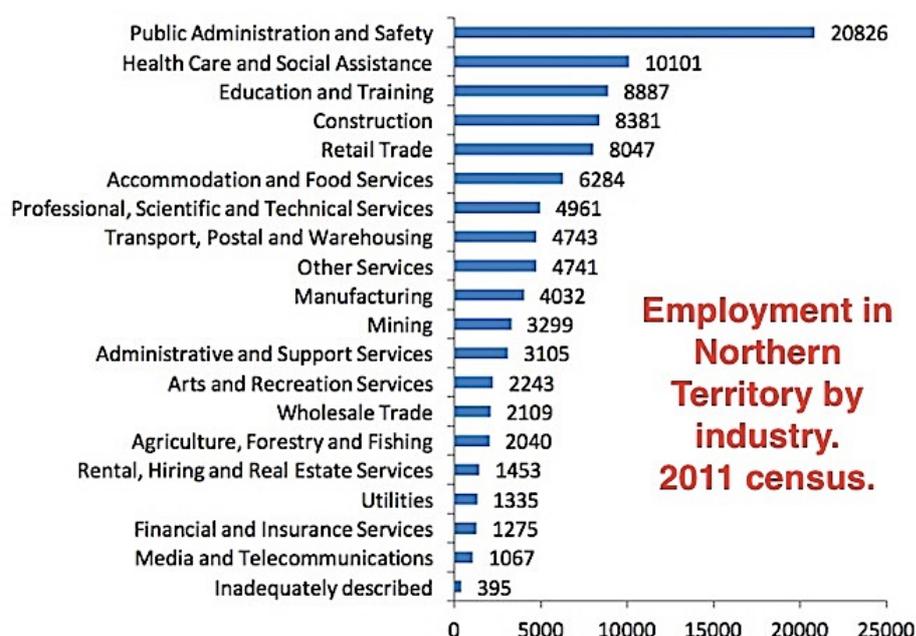


Table 1. Many Territorians are either directly or indirectly employed by the Public Service. Table created by Rod Campbell <http://www.alicespringsnews.com.au/2017/06/21/fracking-in-nt-a-done-deal-says-lock-the-gate/>

4. Territorians want fracking banned

At the Inquiry’s hearing in Darwin on Wednesday 2/8/17, I presented my petition with 2887 signatures calling for fracking to be banned throughout the Northern Territory, stating that Territorians consider any risk level associated with fracking to be unacceptable. I was told by Justice Pepper that recommending a fracking ban was not in the Inquiry’s Terms of Reference. This is not correct.

Item 5 of the ToR states, the Inquiry will “identify any scientific, technical, policy or regulatory requirements or resources that are in addition to the reforms being implemented through the existing environmental reform process that are necessary to reduce environmental risks and impacts associated with the hydraulic fracturing of unconventional reservoirs to acceptable levels”.

Regulations to ban hydraulic fracturing would reduce the risks and impacts to an acceptable level.

Item 6 of the ToR states, “identify priority areas for no go zones”, which allows the Panel to declare the entire NT as a priority no go zone area.

<https://frackinginquiry.nt.gov.au/terms-of-reference>

Appendix 1

Scientific Inquiry into Hydraulic Fracturing in the Northern Territory

Hearing Presentation by Pauline Cass Community Advocate

Wednesday 2 August 2017

Social Licence

Thank you Justice Pepper and Panel, for the opportunity to address this hearing. Your commitment to community consultation is appreciated.

I'd like to clarify before I begin, that while I have recently accepted a position with Lock the Gate NT, I am not working for them today, and am speaking individually as Pauline Cass Community Advocate in a voluntary capacity.

After great consideration of many topics such as increased traffic leading to road accidents and wildlife fatalities (I'm a wildlife carer); the risks of roads diverting water flow and spreading weeds; climate change; and the dangers of flares, I finally settled on discussing social licence.

'Enduring value: the Australian minerals industry framework for sustainable development', defines social licence as obtaining and maintaining broad community support and acceptance. http://www.minerals.org.au/leading_practice/enduring_value

Social license is vital to the fracking industry. Hart Energy says, "securing the social license to operate can prove crucial to an oil and gas company's bottom line" <http://www.epmag.com/securing-social-license-operate-more-important-ever-782186#p=full> . Without broad community support and acceptance, the industry can not operate, especially if landholders are given the right to stop fracking companies from accessing their land.

When I say 'fracking' I mean the community's definition of fracking which is: shale gas extraction and all its related activities.

I have volunteered at many Frack Free stalls: at markets, shopping centres, shows, and even pubs, and have spoken with countless Territorians about 'fracking'. The main thing I have learnt from all my conversations with multitudes of people from all walks of life is:

Territorians want fracking to be banned.

When I say Territorians want fracking to be banned in the Northern Territory, I am speaking on behalf of the 2887 people who have signed my petition calling for fracking to be banned in the Northern Territory.

Page 5 of the Interim Report's Executive Summary also found that, "Overwhelmingly, the message received from the people who attended these meetings was that fracking was not safe, was not trusted and was not wanted in the Northern Territory."

This means that:

Hydraulic fracturing for shale gas and all its related activities has no social licence in the Northern Territory.

Fracking will never have social licence in the NT.

My many conversations with the Territory community from Daly Waters to Darwin has found that fracking will never obtain or maintain broad community support and acceptance due to several factors:

1. The Territory community is well networked and interlinked with everyone knowing everyone or someone who does. This is especially true for long-term Territorians. News travels far and wide very quickly and we stand together when threatened.
2. Territorians see fracking as a threat and it is. It threatens our water, our jobs, our lifestyles, our home, and our childrens' future. Any risk to these things is unacceptable and we simply will not allow it.
3. Territorians have no faith in regulatory controls. We have seen regulations fail at McArthur River mine, Ranger uranium mine, and Darwin Port, to name a few.
4. We are very aware of the importance of safe, reliable water. As the Central Land Council said on page 13 of their Issues Paper submission, "Community members view any level of risk to their water supplies as unacceptable."
(<https://frackinginquiry.nt.gov.au/?a=422802>). The current PFAS debacle in Katherine has been a timely reminder of what happens when a community's water source is contaminated.
5. Social licence can not be bought in the Territory. The risks of fracking are too high and we are too aware of these risks.

For example, people were coming to the Frack Free stall and asking us for yellow triangle No Fracking signs and stickers while holding fishing lures with Origin printed on the side. As one bloke said, "fish can't read". I even went to the APPEA tent and got some lures for my son. Territorians are pragmatic and won't knock back free Reidy's brand fishing lures. It doesn't

mean we support the company, especially not a company giving out free lures while ironically threatening our fishing through water depletion, contamination, or reducing our access to fishing spots. It just means we're practical. This does not constitute social licence.

I have been asked several times now by various people and even Justice Pepper, if the Inquiry finds fracking to be safe, will Territorians accept the findings of this Inquiry and grant fracking social licence. The answer is no. As we find any risk unacceptable and risks do exist, public sentiment is strong that social licence will never be granted. Territorian cohesion and this lack of social licence allows us numerous ways to fight and stop fracking.

We will oppose fracking even if 'no go' zones are recommended for certain areas. As David Close from Origin told me at the Katherine Show, Victoria's onshore gas ban hasn't stopped them from drilling horizontally from onshore to access offshore gas <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-10-23/lakes-oil-to-drill-onshore-to-access-gippsland/5835082> . Can we then trust them to not drill horizontally under 'no go' areas or vetoed land to access the shale here?

To further support the lack of social licence the unconventional gas industry has in the NT, I'd like to read a letter written by a rural resident, Debbie Boakes. She was unable to register for the hearings, so asked me to read her letter for her:

Dear Justice Pepper and Panel,

My name is Debbie Boakes. I have lived in the Darwin rural area for the past 31 years. My husband and I bought a virgin 5 acre piece of the Territory to call our own and make into our little piece of paradise. The biggest risk with this purchase was the availability of usable ground (bore) water as there was no local history of water in the immediate area and town supply was unavailable, as is still the situation. Everything that is on this block, we have planted, built and planned for the long term. During this time, we have raised three children and one has shown interest in eventually purchasing this property and when the time comes raise his family here as well.

Now I know that fracking isn't going to happen next door to me, but with study I have learnt that a 7 acre pad that is fracked can radiate out underground (like octopus tentacles) to access 2000 acres of shale reservoirs¹. This is a consideration that could have an impact that could jeopardise our lives, our lifestyles and property. This could impact on our water supply that we use for drinking and everyday use. Without this supply of uncontaminated ground

¹ <http://www.energyandcapital.com/articles/multi-well-pad/2892>

water we will be have no future on our rural block, neither will those around us who supply freshly grown food for the community. This could be a very real scenario if the reports on fracking's past history are correct. Just recently, many rural blocks had their water supply severely reduced and in some circumstances completed dry up, due to below wet season rains in the past couple of years. They were left no choice but to import water to remain on their properties. Darwin and the rural area is growing and demanding more water with limited plans for future storage and containment, therefore ground water must be considered as the most valuable commodity above all. Yet we in the NT are being asked to contemplate giving our approval for fracking which can consume 10 million litres of drinking water per frack that should be reserved for the survival of mankind, in return for a better deal with GST. What are we thinking???

We see stories appear in the paper and on TV of real people, families fighting the mining magnates to save what is theirs and for the environment. We all need to be standing together as one against these companies who rape and pillage the land for their own financial gain, usually leaving an environmental mess behind. Accidents can and do happen and when they do the impact is irreversible, can we take that gamble?

I couldn't imagine what Mataranka Hot Springs would look like if Gina Rinehart gets her way and fracks there. Don't tell me that there won't be any environmental destruction or disturbance to nature, that you won't see and hear the impacts on Mataranka. Will the tourists still want to visit there?

Recently our son climbed Ayers Rock. He was totally in awe of the beauty and magnificence of it from the top, being able to view the scenery for as far as the eye could see. But wait, the mining industry has staked out around the Rock just outside the National Park, with Santos wanting to frack gas within 75kms from the Rock. Imagine what it would look like from the top of the rock... The tourists probably wouldn't visit which leads to another problem, the impacts on tourism and our economy.

There's also the question of how the mining will actually affect the Rock and the Olgas. There is evidence that fracking can cause earthquakes. How is that going to affect these two beautiful sites?? Don't ask the mining companies,

because their response will be “there’s no scientific evidence that would suggest fracking causes earthquakes”. Really! There’s reports on that as well².

I just don’t trust what authorities say anymore. They tell you what they choose to tell you and it usually lacks transparency and truth. Before building Wickham Point, authorities said we wouldn’t see it from the wharf. What a joke, what a lie.

I love fishing and being out on the river. I don’t care if I don’t catch a fish. I love looking out for crocodiles, they certainly make the trip interesting and exciting. Our waterways are fresh, clean and home to so many fascinating animals, birds and fish. The Government advertises the “Million Dollar Barra” as a tourist plug. To get the fishos from all over the world to have a flick and try their luck at landing a tagged fish or two. It maybe all for nought if fracking goes ahead.

There are 600 different chemicals used in fracking fluid. That’s approx. 150,000 litres of chemicals used for each fracturing site, the waste fluid left over from the fracking process is left in open air pits to evaporate, which releases dangerous volatile organic compounds into the atmosphere, creating contaminated air, acid rain and ground level ozone.

I actually question why we are having an enquiry and why we need a report done on the effects of fracking. The questions and answers come from the countries that have gone down that fracking road. Would they do it again knowing what they know now? I would suggest probably not. So why is the Territory and even we as a nation considering this?

Mr Gunner, I have only touched on the fracking process and not the impacts associated with the long term effects which also need consideration. As Chief Minister, you now have the opportunity to make a stand and demonstrate to the Territory public that you have their interests at heart. Sign the legislation against Fracking. You will have spared the Territory from the mistakes made elsewhere and protected some of the most beautiful and iconic places in the world. Our environment is why we call the Territory home and many visit supporting our tourist industry. Are you prepared and 100% confident that there will be no cost to public health and the environment? And can the true cost be known when there is a lack of transparency in the fracking industry? There are enough countries now witnessing the effects of fracking

² <http://www.globalresearch.ca/fracking-not-just-fracking-wastewater-injection-causing-earthquakes-in-western-canada-study/5517562>

poisoning the environment and the health of those living with it. Don't let this happen to the Territory.

Please stand your ground and don't be bullied by the giant companies and even our own Government in Canberra who look for short term solutions. Look at the great big picture that the Territory paints. It is a beautiful picture, let's keep it that way.

One more thing to consider. Shale gas is a resource that will always be there for future generations. Maybe one day a safer method of extraction will be available and all Territorians will benefit from the correct decision to ban fracking now.

Say no to Fracking and let the future tell the real story.

Website: Fracking Concerns: 8 Dangerous Side Effects of Fracking that the Industry doesn't want you to know



A Territorian family with Ban Fracking stickers covering the word Santos on their free hats
Darwin Show 27 July 2017

Appendix 2.

The economic importance of horticulture and agriculture

“The gross value of production for NT farming industries is estimated at \$244.4 million for 2015.”

“The total tons produced for 2015 is estimated at 97,500 tons from horticultural production and 80,000 tons from rain fed hay production.”

“NT Farmers estimate of production is significantly larger than the ABS estimate of NT production of \$87 million for 2014-15.”

NT Farmers, Economic Profile of Plant Based Industries in the Northern Territory 2015

http://www.ntfarmers.org.au/sites/default/files/blog_attachments/NTFA%20Economic%20Profile.web.pdf

The Importance of the NT’s “good quality and safe food” production.

“Our competitive advantage overseas ... is our ability to provide good quality and safe food”.

Video: Developing the North champion - Alister Trier (NT Government 31/10/16)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VyvRGtUS8VM>

The Importance of fishing to indigenous and remote employment

“One of the big things about fisheries is they’ve actually got currently 24% indigenous employment within Fisheries Division”

“it’s to help build a workforce up in remote communities. There’s a corporation that’s established now in Nhulunby, Garngirr Fishing Aboriginal Corporation. So they’ve got a vision of being like a fishing co-op throughout East Arnhem”.

Developing the North champion - Bo Carne (NT Government 17/11/16)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I9kL2Eu7g5A>

The Importance of fishing to the tourism industry

“Our investment in fishing infrastructure is a smart move, creating jobs and building on one of our greatest strengths,” Minister Vowles said. “The Territory is already a world-class fishing destination, and we need to continually work to improve and enhance the experience, to attract more visitors and keep fishers here longer.”

AFANT President Warren de With said it’s great to see Government deliver on its commitment to recreational fishing. “We all know how important this industry is to the Territory”

Ken Vowles, Minister for Primary Industry and Resources, Media Statement, 16 July 2017

<http://newsroom.nt.gov.au/mediaRelease/23449>

“Recreational fishing is a key part of the Territory lifestyle and economy – it creates jobs and is a big part of what keeps so many people living in the NT,” Mr Vowles said. “Developing the Territory’s

recreational fishing opportunities will benefit Territorians and visitors while enhancing our reputation as a world-class fishing destination.”

Ken Vowles, Minister for Primary Industry and Resources, Media Statement, 16 July 2017

<http://newsroom.nt.gov.au/mediaRelease/23448>

As a matter of interest, here is a video of Amber Driver at home at Elkedra Station (she spoke at the Alice Springs hearing).

Developing the North champion - Amber Driver (NT Government 12/5/16)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SJDO9PpsfZs>

Thank you for taking the time to read this submission,

Pauline Cass.