



Rob Oakeshott MP
FEDERAL MEMBER FOR LYNE



MEDIA RELEASE

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OAKESHOTT WANTS PRIORITY ASSESSMENT FOR GLOUCESTER

INDEPENDENT Lyne MP Rob Oakeshott has called for a scientific study on the impact of coal-seam gas mining on the Gloucester Valley's water resources.

Mr Oakeshott, who with New England MP Tony Windsor, secured tighter regulation of coal-seam gas mining during negotiations last November on the mining tax, has written to the federal Environment Minister, Tony Burke, requesting priority research status for Gloucester.

"An Interim Expert Scientific Committee on Coal-seam Gas and Coal Mining has been established, which will provide state and territory governments with the opportunity to seek advice on coal-seam gas and coal mining developments in the lead-up to a formal arrangement being agreed to by COAG in February," Mr Oakeshott said.

"The interim committee is an early opportunity to have Gloucester considered a priority area for scientific research, particularly because of the community's heightened concerns about the potential impact of mining activities on local water resources.

"The research, to be commissioned by the interim committee, is 'no regrets', independent, unbiased research that addresses key scientific questions about the impact of coal-seam gas and coal mining on water.

"If our request is successful, the subsequent research would enable the committee to provide scientific advice on the AGL project, and the independent findings, not influenced by stakeholders or interest groups, would be made public," Mr Oakeshott said.

The interim committee members are:

- Chairman Craig Simmons, Professor of Hydrogeology at Flinders University and Director of National Centre for Groundwater Research and Training;
- Professor John Langford, a Fellow, Australian Academy of Technical Sciences and Engineering, and a Fellow, Institution of Engineers, Australia;
- Ms Jane Coram, a groundwater expert at Geoscience Australia and member of the Expert Panel on Coal Seam Gas
- Associate Professor David Laurence who has a PhD in Mining Engineering and is the inaugural Director of the Australian Centre for Sustainable Mining Practices;
- Professor Chris Moran, the Director of Sustainable Minerals Institute at the University of Queensland; and
- Emeritus Professor Peter G Flood, a geologist with 44 years' experience in basin studies and a member of the Australasian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy.

ENDS

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