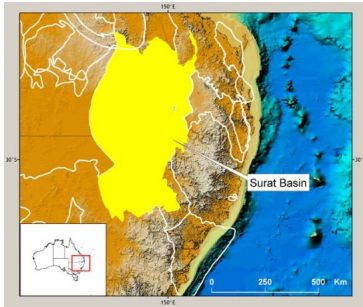


Bore survey project begins on Darling Downs

Written by Andrew Cripps



Brisbane 1 July 2013. Queensland Government research in the Surat Basin will give a better understanding of the potential impact of coal seam gas operations on groundwater resources.

Minister for Natural Resources and Mines Andrew Cripps said the independent Office of Groundwater Impact Assessment (OGIA) was undertaking a range of hydrogeological research projects as part of the implementation of the *Surat Underground Water Impact Report*.

“One of these projects will involve a field survey of around 100 private water bores in the Condamine area to check their suitability for subsequent water level and chemistry sampling, and aquifer pump testing,” Mr Cripps said.

“The *Condamine Interconnectivity Research Project* will improve understanding of the interconnectivity between the Condamine Alluvium and the underlying Walloon Coal Measures which is the coal seam gas-bearing formation in the area.

“It will also provide greater knowledge about the potential impacts of CSG operations on water pressure in underlying and overlying aquifers.

“Contractors retained by OGIA are contacting local landholders about participating in the field survey which will only proceed on a property with the bore owner’s support.”

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Mr Cripps said the project was important because the groundwater of the Condamine Alluvium was a major source of water for irrigation.

“CSG is produced by pumping groundwater from coal seams to release gas and it’s acknowledged that this process could reduce water pressures in the coal seam.

“The *Surat Underground Water Impact Report* in 2012 found that while planned CSG development would impact on groundwater, that impact in most cases would not be significant.

“However, because we recognise the importance of this water resource, building our understanding of the interconnectivity between the Walloon Coal Measures and the Condamine Alluvium is a focus of the research.

“Outcomes from the project will be incorporated into the revision of the regional groundwater flow model that will be used to update the *Surat Underground Water Impact Report* in late 2015.”

Mr Cripps said the OGIA had, in consultation with the Gasfields Commission, established a Condamine Stakeholders Reference Group comprising representatives of the Basin Sustainability Alliance, Condamine River Basin Irrigators Association and leading landholders.

“A Technical Advisory Panel of nationally-recognised independent experts will have full access to data collected and provide advice to the OGIA on the project. This group includes John Hillier, a hydrogeologist of national standing who has extensive experience in the Condamine area.”

More information is available at: www.dnrm.qld.gov.au/ogia