

Comment invited on CSG Water Management Policy

BSA is encouraging its members to take the time to review and comment on the Government's revised Water CSG Management policy before December 23. Information from DERM is as follows:

The Department of Environment and Resource Management (DERM) has developed draft amendments to the Coal Seam Gas Water Management Policy June 2010 which establishes aquifer injection as the first priority water management option for coal seam gas (CSG) water.

CSG water is a by-product of the production of coal seam gas. It is drawn from the coal seam in order to enable the gas to be released and captured.

The Coal Seam Gas Water Management Policy June 2010 clearly states the Queensland Government's intent on how CSG water should be managed.

The policy provides guidance to applicants and decision-makers and gives weight to the requirement to consider and adopt aquifer injection as a CSG water management option.

The government has made refinements to this policy to reprioritise the management options for CSG water and to promote sustainable management of Queensland's groundwater resources.

The draft amendments to the policy set aquifer injection or virtual injection of suitably treated water as the first priority management option for CSG water.

Injection involves the transfer of CSG water treated to standards suitable for the receiving aquifer back into groundwater systems.

Virtual injection is where CSG water is treated to an appropriate standard and provided to water users, such as landholders, as a water source associated with a replacement or reduction of their traditional take of groundwater.

The draft amendments establish beneficial use as the second priority management option for CSG water. Beneficial use is where treated water is provided to water users as a resource. It does not involve any replacement or reduction of existing water use.

The draft amendments recognise that 100 percent of water will not be able to be injected into aquifers or provided through virtual injection to water users and therefore beneficial use and other water management options still play an important role in the management of CSG water.

All applications for level 1 CSG environmental authorities are required to provide an Environmental Management Plan (EM Plan) which outlines any environmental risks and how these risks will be managed.

The EM Plan for CSG activities must include water production forecasts and how this water will be managed. Adoption of the new government policy will require these CSG EM Plans to investigate aquifer injection and virtual injection, and propose these options as part of their water management system where feasible.

DERM has prepared a range of supporting materials to assist with the implementation of the new policy position and feedback is encouraged. The documents include the following:

- An updated [Draft CSG Water Management Policy](#) (PDF, 138k)*: outlines the government's position on CSG water management

- A companion [discussion paper](#) (PDF, 137k)* seeking input on the regulatory framework investigating emerging policy areas such as virtual injection arrangements and injection in areas outside of petroleum tenures.

This information and a copy of the above documents can be found on the DERM website - http://www.derm.qld.gov.au/environmental_management/coal-seam-gas/water-policy-review.html

Lodging your submission

The government welcomes all feedback on the draft policy and supporting documents.

Submission and comments can be provided by submitting a response to DERM in one of the following ways:

Email: csgreg@derm.qld.gov.au

Mail:

Coal Seam Gas Water Management Policy Consultation

Energy Resources

Environment and Natural Resource Regulation

Department of Environment and Resource Management

GPO Box 2454

Brisbane Qld 4001

Fax: (07) 3330 5634

Please submit your response by 5 pm, 23 December 2011.

ENDS

For further information contact Ian Hayllor 07 4663 5512 or 0428 795 548.

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