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Inquiry finds hydraulic fracturing poses negligible risk

Australia's peak oil and gas body is calling for an end to scare campaigns against hydraulic fracturing in Western Australia after a two-year Parliamentary inquiry concluded the technology posed negligible risk.

The WA Legislative Council's Environment and Public Affairs Committee has also recognised the potential benefits of a shale gas industry *"as an employer, an investment generator and a provider of future energy security."*

APPEA Chief Operating Officer – Western Region Stedman Ellis said the report was a strong vote of confidence in the oil and gas industry and urged groups which had campaigned for an inquiry into hydraulic fracturing to accept the committee's findings.

He said it was notable that the Conservation Council of WA, in particular, had been singled out by the committee for making claims about the industry that were *"greatly over-stated"* and *"not based on evidence."*

"The committee has carefully considered the evidence, it has listened to all sides of the debate and it has unanimously concluded that any concerns about fracking can be addressed through robust regulation and ongoing monitoring," Mr Ellis said.

"This mirrors the findings of numerous other inquiries and reviews here in Australia and overseas which have found that with careful regulation and industry best practice, fracking can be done safely."

"The committee also recognises the importance of mutually beneficial land access agreements and acknowledges the work by APPEA and peak farming bodies to encourage such arrangements."

"The public can take confidence from the fact that the committee has broadly endorsed WA's existing regulatory framework for onshore gas while making a number of sensible recommendations to enhance safeguards."

"APPEA and its members will continue to work with the State Government, landowners and other key stakeholders to ensure the shale gas industry is developed safely and sustainably for the benefit of all Western Australians."

Media Contact: Kieran Murphy – 0408 151 922 – kmurphy@appea.com.au