

# GAS WATCH 197.

In another display of arrogance and complete disregard for the local community, **AGL** is reported to have asked today: *“We own it (the land), so could we drill on it?”*

Well, according to the O’Farrell announcements, the answer is a resounding **“No”**.

The community of the Hunter Valley does not want **AGL** setting up gas fields and has been actively opposing this since 2004. It’s time **AGL** faced up to its lack of support by both the community and now the Government, and just went away from the Hunter.

The O’Farrell Government is to be applauded for listening to the community and for taking steps to save the environment and the iconic vineyards of the Hunter Valley, honouring its pre-election promises.

The community is so opposed to **AGL** turning the Hunter Valley into a gas field that **AGL** has had to buy large tracts of land in the Broke and Bulga vineyard areas because landholders won’t give them access to their land.

Surely **AGL** CEO Michael Fraser is well aware:

- That **AGL**’s methane mining manager Mike Moraza, gave evidence before the Senate Enquiry that **AGL** would not go to Court to obtain access to a property\*, yet here is **AGL** considering legal action;
- That the reported 800 hectares of land **AGL** has bought to conduct methane mining can be easily sold off to mitigate their loss;
- Of why they bought the land, or indeed Sydney Gas Ltd, in the first place when they knew of the massive community opposition;
- That shareholders must be very concerned about **AGL** continuing to spend money on coal seam methane exploration in the Hunter, when the Government has now told them that they won’t be able to obtain a production licence; and (a year or so ago) that they are *“wasting their shareholders money”* (Minister Hazzard); and that two years ago Minister Souris said *“AGL should just surrender their PEL now and save everyone a lot of time in the future.”*
- That **AGL**’s Petroleum Exploration Licence 267 has not yet been renewed;
- That **AGL** has breached several Licence conditions in its exploration in the Hunter Valley and in its production in Camden and has lost its social licence to operate, if it ever had one. Not only has it breached Licence conditions in its headlong rush into coal seam methane, it has lied to the community and spun all sorts of tales. Claiming that the community is responsible for spreading misinformation about the CSG industry is plain misleading. Just look at the mountain of evidence on our website.
- That, on our reading of the current law, as a result of breaching Licence conditions the Minister may cancel a Petroleum Exploration Licence (S. 22(1)(a) Petroleum (Onshore) Act) in respect of which cancellation *“No compensation is payable by the Crown”* (S. 22(5)).

**FAREWELL**  
**AGL**



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4<sup>th</sup> March, 2013. Contact: Graeme Gibson 65791062.

Hansard.

Chair: are you going to enforce your right to enter the property?

Mr Moraza: No, I think our inclination would be to move on. As I said, we are in the exploration phase. There is a lot of country out there that can be explored and we would move on.

CHAIR: ...are you going to sneak up one morning and knock on the door and say, 'You have got 21 days to agree or we are taking you to court'?

Mr Moraza: No, that is not a practice or behaviour that is tolerable—

CHAIR: So you will set that in stone, will you, that you will not force entry onto a property where the property owner says no?

Mr Moraza: If we do not have access rights, we are certainly not going to force entry onto a property.