

GAS WATCH 29.

Sydney Gas – take over by AJ Lucas Group?

So, Sydney Gas has announced that the AJ Lucas Group is to take 15% of Sydney Gas now, with some incentive ability to increase that holding later. Is this a take over of Sydney Gas?

What will this do to the relations the community has been building with Sydney Gas and with the Chairman of the Board, Dr. John Saunders.

Over the past few months Sydney Gas has given certain indications to the community which has given landholders confidence that the Broke and Bulga valleys will not be invaded by Coal Seam Methane Gas exploration and all the environmental disadvantages that go with it, including the risk to the Wollombi Brook and to all our underground and surface water.

Concerns have now arisen in the minds of some landholders that either Sydney Gas may have been just buying time to enable it to seek additional funds; or that the AJ Lucas Group will take the view that it is not bound by any indications or undertakings which have been given to the community by Sydney Gas or Dr. Saunders.

It will be interesting to see at the next meeting of the Community Consultative Committee what approach will be taken by the new CEO of Sydney Gas – Andy Lukas, the current Technical Director of AJ Lucas. Dr. Saunders has given, in the Sydney Stock Exchange announcement, great support to Andy Lukas describing his appointment will provide “the expertise and support...needed to make Sydney Gas the success that it deserves to be.” Last time Dr. Saunders gave a CEO such support, the CEO lasted about two weeks in the job. We will all have to wait and see what Andy Lukas brings to the Company and to the Company’s prior undertakings and indications in relation to exploration in the Hunter Valley. And we’ve lost count. Is he the third CEO in 12 months and the 8th since 2004 in this revolving door of CEO’s.

It may well be that Andy Lukas will insist that Community Newsletters address the issues and give information, rather than have infantile competitions on “spot the gas well”. Well, you read the last Community Newsletter. Very little information, then a page of how nobody spotted the gas well in the last Newsletter so “emphasising the point that the wells make no indiscernible impact on the environment and the landscape.”

Note how this childish competition doesn’t mention what gas exploration wells look like; or what the fracking operation looks like or sounds like; or what flaring gas looks like and how it scares away native fauna and birds; or what previously fertile land looks like when there has been toxic water spilled onto it, which has happened at previous exploration sites. Just how hard is it to see that sort of infrastructure in these following exploration photos – pretty obvious:



The Sydney Gas Community Newsletter also seeks to introduce the “faces of Sydney Gas” in the Hunter, Colin Stace, its Land and Community Officer, and Elizabeth Flaherty, its public relations consultant. That was in December last year. Have we heard from either of them? No. Same old Sydney Gas, it appears. Nothing’s changed since the identical lack of communication from Hind Kourouche and Scott Black. Some public relations!

We must be vigilant not to let Sydney Gas, or its successors, rape our valley in the interests of corporate profits.

Contact HB GAG for free legal advice in relation to Sydney Gas, particularly if they approach you seeking to drill on your own property.

DO NOT LET SYDNEY GAS, AJ LUCAS, OR ANY GAS EXPLORER ONTO YOUR PROPERTY. THEY HAVE NO RIGHTS TO ENTER WITHOUT YOU SIGNING AN ACCESS AGREEMENT.

Encourage your neighbours also to resist Sydney Gas. Do you want a gas exploration next door, like they had in Bulga in the left picture above? Well, do you? If they drill next door they can come under your own property without even needing your permission.

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