

# **GAS WATCH 60.**

## **ACCC asks Sydney Gas to change its “green” claims.**

Late last year, this Group asked the Australian Competition & Consumer Commission to investigate the claims by Sydney Gas that “Coal Seam Methane natural gas is a clean burning and a “green form” of energy”.

We also asked the ACCC to look at the claims by Sydney Gas that “Coal seam natural (Methane) gas produces half the greenhouse gas emissions of burning coal” and “Coal seam natural (methane) gas produces almost half the greenhouse gas of burning coal.”

The ACCC has advised us, that:

In the view of the ACCC, the claim by Sydney Gas that “Coal Seam methane natural gas is a clean burning and “green form” of energy” is not misleading or deceptive because Sydney Gas has placed the words “*green form*” in inverted commas, and can be read as “saying that in comparison to burning coal, burning coal seam methane gas is the greener option.”; **What nonsense!**

In the view of the ACCC, the second two claims by Sydney gas “*may constitute contraventions of sections 52 and 52(3) of the Act.*” These are the sections prohibiting corporations from engaging in conduct that is misleading or deceptive or is likely to mislead or deceive.

The ACCC asked itself the question: are the claims made by Sydney Gas concerning the greenhouse gas emissions of burning coal seam natural (methane) gas made “in the course of” trade or commerce or merely “in relation” to trade or commerce.

***Unfortunately the ACCC has taken the soft option. It has not bared its teeth.***

The ACCC says that because the answer to this question is not clear, the ACCC feels “this issue may fall outside the jurisdiction of the Commission.”

The ACCC has not considered what it should do if “this issue DOES fall within the jurisdiction of the Commission.”

***The ACCC advised however, “Notwithstanding the jurisdictional issue that may arise, I have written to Sydney Gas and requested that it amend its website.”***

This is better than nothing, and Sydney Gas may amend its website. But you would have thought that the ACCC would have taken a tougher stand against these outrageous claims.

**How can burning fossil fuels be considered even remotely environmentally sustainable or, green”?**

Contact HB GAG Hunter Bulga Gas Action Group Inc. PO Box 120, BROKE 2330  
[www.huntergasactiongroup.com.au](http://www.huntergasactiongroup.com.au)