

Fuel for Thought

Like a duck paddling

Most of us have probably heard the quote about being like the duck paddling. Everything looks calm on the surface but underwater we're paddling furiously.

It's a bit like that at QER these days as we continue our efforts to develop a commercial 'fuels from shale' industry, and look for an investment partner for the venture.

Apart from the financing activity we're also undertaking some advanced engineering work, and undergoing the processes involved in gaining environmental approvals for the project.

The major part of the approvals process involves completing an Environmental Impact Statement, better known as an EIS. Appropriately, it is a very rigorous and exhaustive process involving numerous studies, plenty of monitoring and, in the end, mountains of paper.

An EIS involves a detailed analysis of a project's processes and potential environmental impacts, and ways of eliminating or minimising them. It also weighs up the potential social benefits of a project against the cost.

There has been much in the media lately about 'green tape reduction', which has been welcomed by industry and potential investors.

The Government's reform measures are squarely aimed at reducing administration, duplication and bureaucracy, but there's no doubt every project is still subject to the highest standards of environmental scrutiny.

QER is commissioning studies into flora and fauna, air quality, surface and groundwater monitoring and controls, social impact assessments and a range of other ecological activities, as well as conducting indigenous and non-indigenous cultural heritage studies.

Obviously we will have to meet stringent standards.

By necessity all this work involves undertaking activities on properties around our facility, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the various landholders involved for their patience and acceptance in allowing us to conduct our required tasks. It is very much appreciated.

As a Gladstone resident I am very keen to see the benefits that can come with new investment, but also want to see projects done in a way that protects the environmental values that make this a great part of the world.

As far as I'm concerned, the EIS process is rigorous enough to ensure that outcome.



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Creating new fuels for Australia

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