

C. and P. Jones

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Keir Delaney,
Secretary, Environment & Planning Committee
Parliament House,
Spring Street,
East Melbourne VIC 3002

Inquiry into Unconventional Gas in Victoria.

Dear Sir,

Having looked at some of the convoluted ownership structures that some of the Gas Mining Companies are using, I am not reassured that final responsibility for damage will be appropriately dealt with.

Some exploration companies seem to have very few actual assets. Is there any assurance that clean ups like the recent open cut coal mine fire, don't cost vastly more than the deposit or any insurance coverage?

Our country is littered with deserted mining efforts; apparently there are about 52,500 abandoned mines nationwide. In 'The Saturday Paper' Edition 13 May 23 -30 -2014, the Leading article (3 pages) 'Mining's billion dollar black hole—Mining's Toxic Legacy' was comprehensive. Corieen Ungar of the Centre for Mined Land Rehabilitation at Queensland University and one of the leading experts on abandoned or orphaned mines in particular, is quoted in this enlightening article, **Victoria is the worst State** she says. "If you look for abandoned mines you won't find them documented. It's not even something you can talk to someone about. It's no one's responsibility," she says.

Does this Environment and Planning Committee know if there is someone who is now responsible for Victoria's abandoned mines and overseeing the restoration of them?

In The Saturday Paper—Edition 15 June 7-13- 2014 featured another enlightening article titled 'Underground economy' written by Hamish McDonald. He investigates the American experience fracking for gas and 'tight' oil in shale formations. Fascinating reading. Australian miners claim that gas from coal seams and shale is an important "transitional" fuel between coal or heavy oil and future no-carbon energy sources. In reality, the US Gas boom has virtually killed off investment in alternative renewable energy sources. We don't need another 'transitional' fossil fuel whose stray methane emissions can be more harmful than carbon dioxide.

If we consider Tesla's new solar batteries as featured in Australian National Review, Edition 9 June 2015, you would seriously wonder why we would spend billions of dollars on an industry that should be becoming a thing of the past.

Thank you for your time.

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