

From: Davis, Mark - Combet [M.Davis@climatechange.gov.au]
Sent: Wednesday, 5 December 2012 4:40 PM
To: Wendy Carlisle
Subject: Re: questions for the Minister re CSG emissions [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi again Wendy.

Yes this is a new development. Responses to your questions below are attributable to a spokesperson for Greg Combet

DCCEE has a long standing collaboration with CSIRO on estimation methods for the national greenhouse gas inventory and NGER. The current collaboration is a progression of that relationship. DCCEE has been in discussions with CSIRO about this work stream for a few weeks. The research project by the CSIRO aligned with DCCEE's requirements and a collaborative approach was recently agreed, with details published by the CSIRO on December 4 at <http://www.csiro.au/Outcomes/Energy/Fugitive-emissions-from-coal-seam-gas>. This collaboration is within existing DCCEE and CSIRO programs and the final budget details for the first phase of the research work have not been settled.

Regards,
Mark

From: Wendy Carlisle [mailto:Carlisle.Wendy@abc.net.au]
Sent: Wednesday, December 05, 2012 11:25 AM
To: Davis, Mark - Combet
Subject: RE: questions for the Minister re CSG emissions [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Thanks Mark for these answers.
The story will air on Sunday on RN after the 8am news

Regarding your answers...

1. can you please advise on what date DCCEE and CSIRO embarked on the collaboration you refer. Was there a press release announcing this? If so please provide

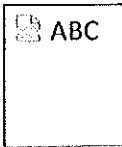
I note the date on the CSIRO web- page making this announcement is Dec 4.
In none of my conversations thus far with CSIRO people has there been mention of research based on "field measurements" at "selected CSG operations.". as far as I can ascertain this is new.

2. What is the budget for this research?

Thanks,

Can I have this today?

Cheers



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From: Davis, Mark - Combet [<mailto:M.Davis@climatechange.gov.au>]
Sent: Tuesday, 4 December 2012 5:28 PM
To: Wendy Carlisle
Subject: RE: questions for the Minister re CSG emissions [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi Wendy,

The following responses to your questions can be attributed to a spokesperson for federal Climate Change Minister Greg Combet.

Out of interest, when is your program going to air?

Regards

Mark

1. Why hasn't the government commissioned independent scientific research to assess the level of fugitive emissions from coal seam gas?

The Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency actively monitors international developments with respect to the estimation of emissions from all sources, including coal seam gas. The methods for measuring fugitive emissions are designed to be appropriate to Australian conditions, comply with international guidelines and are subject to international expert review each year under the Kyoto Protocol. Updates to the methods for the measurement of emissions are regularly undertaken for the national inventory and subsequently for the methods used by companies under the National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting (NGER) scheme. The measurement methods for coal seam gas are being reviewed by DCCEE as part of annual review of emissions estimation methods.

Coal seam gas (CSG) is an important industry in Australia and the Government welcomes further measurement based information on fugitive emissions from the CSG production process in order to better inform national and company emission estimation methods. CSIRO and the Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency are collaborating to further investigate fugitive emissions from CSG in Australia. The project is intended to provide preliminary data based on field measurements and modelling of methane emissions from a sample of production facilities in New South Wales and Queensland.

The primary aims of the project are to:

- Make close-in measurements at selected CSG operations to quantify fugitive emission fluxes from various parts of the production process (e.g. wells, surface infrastructure); and
- Develop atmospheric techniques to monitor and quantify methane fluxes from production facilities from distances up to tens of kilometres away from the source.

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This research is an important next step in filling the existing knowledge gap by establishing scientifically robust and consistent methods for fugitive emissions monitoring and measurement. Ultimately this research will lead to the development of suitable Australian-specific methods for monitoring and quantifying fugitive emissions from the CSG industry. Doing so will enable a better understanding of the magnitude and effect of fugitive emissions. The project will begin in early 2013 and a report on the research findings will be published and made publicly available at the completion of the work.

The DCCEE will take all relevant evidence and analysis into account in developing any changes to reporting under the NGER scheme.

The Government's carbon price provides a strong incentive for the reduction of fugitive emissions, including those from coal seam gas.

Further information on the CSIRO research is available at: <http://www.csiro.au/Outcomes/Energy/Fugitive-emissions-from-coal-seam-gas>

Further information on the Department's consultation on fugitive emissions from coal seam gas is available here: <http://www.climatechange.gov.au/government/submissions/closed-consultations/coal-seam-gas.aspx>

2. Will the government fund, or seek assurances from the industry that they will fund independent research into CSG fugitive emissions?

See answer to question one. The Government would also welcome any additional independent and credible research findings, such as those which are peer reviewed.

3. Does the government agree with the Pitt and Sherry report that it is a matter of concern that there is no information on the public record into fugitive emissions from CSG?

The Government commissioned the Pitt and Sherry report *Review of literature on international best practice for estimating greenhouse gas emissions from coal seam gas production* as part of its annual review of emissions estimation methods. The report explored whether approaches used in other countries like the US to measure fugitive emissions from CSG are suitable for use in Australia. The report found that there are significant differences between Australia and the US which means that there is a need to develop approaches that are suitable for Australian conditions. As noted above, the CSIRO research is a significant next step towards this goal.

Updates to the methods for the measurement of emissions are regularly undertaken for the national inventory and subsequently for the methods used by companies under the NGER scheme. DCCEE actively monitors developments with respect to the estimation of emissions from all sources, including coal seam gas. The Pitt and Sherry report and submissions received through a public consultation process are inputs into this review. DCCEE invited submissions on methods for estimating emissions from coal seam gas extraction in May 2012. The deadline for submissions was 19 October 2012. DCCEE received 17 submissions which have been published. Following the consideration of submissions DCCEE will release a discussion paper to inform any proposed amendments to the Determination in the first half of 2013 and hold further stakeholder consultations. Amendments to the NGER (Measurement) Determination (which sets out the methods for the measurement of emissions reported by companies under NGERS) are released before 1 July each year.

From: Wendy Carlisle [<mailto:Carlisle.Wendy@abc.net.au>]
Sent: Monday, 3 December 2012 2:11 PM
To: Davis, Mark - Combet
Subject: questions for the Minister re CSG emissions

Hi Mark,

I note that the Minister is only willing to field written responses to questions from Background Briefing.

In view of this I have the following questions:

4. Why hasn't the government commissioned independent scientific research to assess the level of fugitive emissions from coal seam gas?
5. Will the government fund, or seek assurances from the industry that they will fund independent research into CSG fugitive emissions?
6. Does the government agree with the Pitt and Sherry report that it is a matter of concern that there is no information on the public record into fugitive emissions from CSG?

Can I have the response by COB tomorrow.

thanks



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From: Davis, Mark - Combet [<mailto:M.Davis@climatechange.gov.au>]
Sent: Wednesday, 28 November 2012 4:08 PM
To: Wendy Carlisle
Subject: RE: Interview request: Minister Combet [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi Wendy,

With the Departmental review under way, which involves technical and scientific issues, we are not in a position to do an interview.

If you want to send through any specific questions, I may be able to provide written responses.

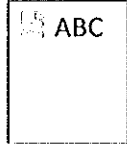
Regards

Mark

From: Wendy Carlisle [<mailto:Carlisle.Wendy@abc.net.au>]
Sent: Wednesday, 28 November 2012 2:13 PM
To: Davis, Mark - Combet
Subject: RE: Interview request: Minister Combet [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

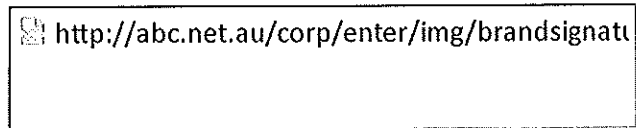
Hi Mark

Is there a reason?



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From: Davis, Mark - Combet [<mailto:M.Davis@climatechange.gov.au>]
Sent: Tuesday, 27 November 2012 6:00 PM
To: Wendy Carlisle
Subject: RE: Interview request: Minister Combet [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi Wendy,

Greg won't be able to do this interview.

Regards

Mark

Mark Davis
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Minister for Industry and Innovation
Ph: 6277 7920 Mob: 

From: Wendy Carlisle [<mailto:Carlisle.Wendy@abc.net.au>]
Sent: Tuesday, 27 November 2012 8:04 AM
To: Davis, Mark - Combet
Subject: Interview request: Minister Combet

Hi Mark,

I am reporter with Background Briefing and I am doing a story about fugitive emissions from unconventional gas production and would like to interview Greg Combet for the story.

In September this year the *Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency* released a literature review into international best practice for estimating greenhouse gas emissions from coal seam gas production.

That review pointed out that research into fugitive emissions in Australia was extremely poor, and suggested a four step process to address the situation, amongst them a rough assessment of the possible relative magnitude of various individual sources. It suggested it may be necessary to use default or implicit emission factors from the US (which are 20 times higher than the Australian FE estimate)

From my research, I can indentify no current Australian research that is doing as *Pitt & Sherry* suggest.

The issue of fugitive emissions and climate change is gaining growing public attention and concern, particularly due to the scale of CSG projects now underway. The recent Southern Cross University preliminary findings suggested an urgent need for real world research into fugitive emissions.

The government is currently reviewing the NGERs determination, but it's hard to see how this can be credibly undertaken in the absence of research in this space.

These are some of the issues which will be raised and it is vital to include the Minister's perspective in the story.

I am happy to make a time to suit the Minister – he could pop into the PH studio – but have a deadline of Friday COB.

Can you please advise me if this is going to be possible asap?

Thanks in advance

Wendy



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