South Australian Chamber Of Mines & Energy

Media Release

MEDIA RELEASE

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SACOME welcomes move to restore science-based approach to South East gas development

The South Australian Chamber of Mines and Energy (SACOME) welcomes the Government's announcement that it will introduce legislation to remove the moratorium on hydraulic fracture stimulation in the South East.

SACOME Chief Executive Officer Catherine Mooney said the proposed *Energy Resources (Regulated Activities) Amendment Bill* represents an important step towards restoring evidence-based policymaking and strengthening the state's long-term energy security.

"This legislation restores science-based decision making and puts South Australia back on the map as a State that welcomes responsible investment," Ms Mooney said.

"Removing the moratorium would allow the South East region to participate fully in the state's economic future, while continuing to operate under some of the strongest environmental protections in the world."

The proposed change comes at a critical time for the east coast energy market, with the Australian Energy Market Operator forecasting increasing risks to gas supply in southern Australia from 2029, and additional supply required in many scenarios from 2030.

"As the east coast faces tightening gas supply, unlocking responsibly regulated local production is a practical step toward energy security and affordability," Ms Mooney said.

"South Australia has world-class environmental safeguards. Allowing those safeguards to operate, rather than imposing blanket bans, is the right path."

SACOME is in full understanding and agreement with the Government that any future proposals in the South East would still be subject to detailed environmental assessment, mandatory public consultation, and formal regulatory approval under the state's rigorous framework.

"All projects will continue to be assessed on their merits," Ms Mooney said.

"There is no shortcut around South Australia's robust regulatory processes, and that should give communities confidence that environmental protections, including groundwater safeguards, remain paramount."

Ms Mooney noted that extensive independent scientific research has consistently found that when properly regulated, hydraulic fracture stimulation can be undertaken safely.

“There have been many independent scientific studies that have concluded that when done properly, fracking is safe. This legislation finally aligns policy with evidence,” she said.

“We can protect our environment and unlock new gas. This is not an either-or choice, and this reform recognises that balance.”

SACOME also acknowledged the importance of ongoing community engagement in the South East, noting that local views are diverse and strongly held.

“We support the Government’s commitment to community engagement and informed discussion,” Ms Catherine said.

“Ensuring communities have access to accurate information and the opportunity to be heard will be critical as this process progresses.”

SACOME said the change would help ensure potential domestic gas resources are not unnecessarily ruled out and could, if proven viable, support South Australian industries including manufacturing and energy generation.

“This is a forward-looking decision that keeps options on the table for future supply while maintaining strong environmental oversight,” Ms Catherine said.

“For South Australia to remain competitive and secure its energy future, it’s important that policy settings reflect both the science and the economic realities we face.”

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About SACOME

SACOME is the leading, fully member-funded industry body representing companies across South Australia's minerals, energy, extractive, oil and gas sectors.

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