

Stable Land Access Frameworks Critical to South Australian Resources Sector

The South Australian Chamber of Mines & Energy (SACOME) are concerned that the stable frameworks relied upon by the resources sector could be dismantled following the 2022 State Election.

Land access continues to be a politically charged issue in South Australia, with fractious public debate being a key feature of the last four years.

The implementation of a fracking moratoria over the Limestone Coast after the 2018 election set a precedent which threatens to be repeated at the 2022 election.

Independent MPs Geoff Brock and Fraser Ellis have declared that their support to form government depends on either major party being prepared to implement the recommendations of the Select Committee Inquiry on Land Access. Independent MP Dan Cregan has also expressed his strong reservations about resource development.

The recommendations contemplate sweeping changes to land access arrangements, effectively amounting to proxy moratoria and would directly impact the viability of exploration and mining projects in South Australia.

Neither major party has expressly ruled out this option, instead opting to hedge their bets depending on which way the political winds blow.

SACOME Chief Executive, Rebecca Knol says: "It is deeply concerning that politicians would risk the stable operation of one of the State's most significant economic sectors for political expediency".

"We've been through four years of legislative review resulting in significant improvements to landholder rights under the Mining Act.

"The stable framework resulting from that massive effort is under threat of being traded away."

SACOME's 2021 Economic Contribution Study demonstrated that just 12 of its member companies contributed \$5.9 billion in direct and indirect spending to the South Australian economy.

The Department of Energy & Mining's 2021 economic data shows that resources activity in South Australia contributes \$8.7 billion or 7.9 per cent of our economic output, alongside \$323 million in royalties and \$5.5 billion in exports.

Rebecca Knol says: “The resources sector is a cornerstone of the South Australian economy. It continued to operate during the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic, materially assisting the State’s economic recovery.”

“It is difficult to reconcile that a key Growth State sector, which is well placed to assist the government achieve its 3% economic growth target, would be put at risk.”

“The ink on the amended Mining Act is barely dry but we’re again facing down the threat of moratoria on the eve of an election. It flies in the face of good process and threatens South Australia’s global reputation as a stable jurisdiction for investment”.

“While Liberal and Labor have both rejected a landholder right to veto and new moratoria, this sector has been burnt by past experience”.

“We’re seeing the green shoots of recovery and good levels of investment. I would encourage our political representatives to push back on their populist instincts and recognise that economic growth and state development will only come about through stability and consistency”.

“It is deeply concerning that the stable frameworks relied upon by our sector could be dismantled for political convenience at this election”.

SACOME’s Resources Sector 2022 Pre-Election Priorities document is available [here](#).

SACOME’s Opinion Piece on Land Access is available [here](#).

SACOME’s submission to the Parliamentary Select Committee Inquiry on Land Access is available [here](#).

Media contacts:

Rebecca Knol, CEO SACOME, 0409 012 007

About SACOME

The South Australian Chamber of Mines and Energy is the peak industry association representing companies with interests and connections to the South Australian resources and energy sector.

Date: 7 March 2022