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Pepper Inquiry finds fracking risks can be managed

The draft final report of the *Scientific Inquiry into Hydraulic Fracturing in the Northern Territory* has found that any risks associated with onshore gas development and fracking can be managed by effective regulation.

APPEA Director South Australia / Northern Territory Matthew Doman said it was critical the 12-month inquiry be completed to bring certainty to investors, local businesses, Traditional Owners, landholders and all Territorians.

"Importantly, the draft report confirms that shale gas development would have significant economic and employment benefits for the NT," Mr Doman said.

"The report, released today, has also debunked many of the myths spread by activists opposed to onshore gas development.

"Justice Pepper's draft report echoes the conclusion reached by numerous other scientific inquiries and reviews that any risks associated with hydraulic fracturing can be minimised or eliminated with proper regulation.

"The report includes 120 recommendations which will need to be considered in detail.

"Any regulatory reforms must be evidence based, workable and cost-effective.

"The industry supports robust, effective and efficient regulation, and will consider whether the report's recommendations are appropriate to achieve this.

"In the meantime, it is crucial the report be finalised as quickly as possible so that the Territory Government can make decisions about the industry's future. Uncertainty will remain until a new regulatory regime is confirmed."

"Gas companies stand ready to invest billions of dollars in new projects in the Territory if the industry is allowed to resume exploration activity.

"There is no reason the Territory cannot manage the safe, sustainable development of its considerable natural gas resources."

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