

4. CONSULTATION

The Surat Gas Project Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) (Coffey Environments, 2012b) described consultation and stakeholder engagement undertaken for the Surat Gas Project from September 2009 through to June 2011. This chapter provides an update on consultation undertaken for the project in the period July 2011 to early 2013, which encompassed the public exhibition period for the EIS. Further details of these activities are contained in Appendix 1, Supplementary Consultation Report, prepared by JTA Australia.

4.1 Consultation Objectives

The EIS consultation process was designed to inform stakeholders of project activities, provide an overview of potential environmental and socioeconomic impacts and provide the community with an opportunity to present their concerns. The objectives of the consultation process were therefore to:

- Identify relevant stakeholders.
- Facilitate an understanding of key stakeholder issues.
- Develop and implement strategies to address stakeholder issues.
- Provide meaningful opportunities for community input into the development of the EIS and the project.

Beyond the EIS process and throughout the life of the project, Arrow will continue to ensure stakeholders receive regular communication about the project and are able to provide feedback or raise issues.

4.2 Consultation and Communication Method

Arrow has continued to consult with the community and relevant stakeholders throughout the EIS process. This has occurred through stakeholder meetings, drop-in sessions, community information sessions, shed meetings, Area Wide Planning meetings, regular meetings of the Arrow Surat Community Reference Group and the Arrow Intensively Farmed Land Committee (AIFL Committee), engagement with the GasFields Commission Queensland, and the opening of the Community Information Centre in Dalby, all of which are described further below.

4.2.1 Consultation Activities

To date, consultation for the Surat Gas Project EIS has extended over seven phases. Phases 1 to 4 were reported on in the EIS. Phase 5 (July to December 2011), Phase 6 (January to July 2012) and Phase 7 (August 2012 ongoing) are described below.

Community Committees

In 2010, Arrow established two community committees in the Surat Basin as part of Arrow's broader engagement strategy to address local issues. The Arrow Surat Community Reference Group and the AIFL Committee were established to address issues of a technical nature and of highest community concern, which could not be addressed in detail during the broader EIS consultation program.

The Arrow Surat Community Reference Group provides a consultative forum and consists of six Arrow staff members and representatives from the Basin Sustainability Alliance, Future Food Queensland, Cotton Australia, Central Downs Irrigators, Australian Petroleum Production and Exploration Association, University of Southern Queensland and regional council delegates.

The AIFL Committee was formed to provide a consultative forum with regard to Arrow's development of coal seam gas infrastructure on intensively farmed land (IFL) within the Surat Basin. The committee includes both representatives of Arrow and various landholders representing different agricultural enterprises on IFL. The committee provides the opportunity to identify issues, provide feedback and collaboratively review opportunities for coexistence of coal seam gas development on IFL.

The Arrow Surat Community Reference Group and the AIFL Committee met three times each in phases 5 and 6, and twice in Phase 7 to date.

Community Information Sessions

Community-wide consultation sessions were held from 24 to 28 October 2011 for Phase 5 and from 30 April to 10 May 2012 for Phase 6. The Phase 6 community sessions aligned with the public exhibition period of the EIS.

Consultation sessions were supported by a communication program to ensure interested community members and stakeholders were aware of the consultation program and received information about the progress of the EIS (see Section 4.2.2, below).

Table 4.1 summarises the details of each of the community information sessions held during phases 5 and 6. Copies of the presentations given at the community sessions are provided in Appendix 1, Supplementary Consultation Report.

Table 4.1 Community information sessions for Phase 5 and Phase 6

Town	Date	Time	Location	Registered Attendees*
Phase 5				
Goondiwindi	24 October 2011	9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.	Goondiwindi Waggamba Community and Cultural Centre	7
Millmerran	24 October 2011	3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.	Community and Cultural Centre	24
Dalby	25 October 2011	8:45 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.	Dalby Showground Pavilion	33
Cecil Plains	26 October 2011	8:45 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.	Cecil Plains Hall	58
Chinchilla	27 October 2011	8:45 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.	Bulldog Park	42
Miles	28 October 2011	10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.	Leichhardt Centre	17
			Columboola Function Room	
<i>Phase 5 total</i>				<i>181</i>
Phase 6				
Millmerran	30 April 2012	9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.	Millmerran Community and Cultural Centre	27
Cecil Plains	1 May 2012	9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.	Cecil Plains Hall	154
Chinchilla	2 May 2012	9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.	Bulldog Park	18
Dalby	3 May 2012	9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.	Dalby RSL	56
Miles	8 May 2012	3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.	Leichhardt Centre	21
			Columboola Function Room	

Table 4.1 Community information sessions for Phase 5 and Phase 6 (cont'd)

Town	Date	Time	Location	Registered Attendees*
Phase 6 (cont'd)				
Wandoan	9 May 2012	9:00 a.m. to 12.00 p.m.	Wandoan Community and Cultural Centre	12
Goondiwindi	10 May 2012	9:00 a.m. to 12.00 p.m.	Goondiwindi Waggamba Community and Cultural Centre	20
<i>Phase 6 total</i>				<i>308</i>

* Numbers for attendees include only people who registered. At all sessions a number of people did not register.

Drop-in Sessions

Drop-in sessions were designed to give stakeholders the opportunity to speak one-on-one with representatives from the project team during the Surat Gas Project EIS public exhibition period. Two rounds of drop-in sessions were held in Chinchilla, Millmerran, Dalby and Toowoomba from 17 April to 20 April 2012 and 29 May to 1 June 2012. These sessions ran from 10:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m., and were staffed at all times by representatives of Arrow's EIS team, Coffey Environments and JTA Australia.

One-on-One Stakeholder Meetings

Following public exhibition of the EIS, Arrow held five meetings with representatives of the Australian Government Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (SEWPaC) and the Queensland Department of Environment and Heritage Protection (EHP).

Shed Meetings

During Phase 7, Arrow conducted a series of shed meetings to discuss coexistence measures and demonstrate the company's capacity to coexist on IFL. The invitation-only meetings were held over three days and attended by a total of 13 stakeholders.

Area Wide Planning Meetings

In December 2012, as a result of issues raised during AIFL Committee meetings, Arrow commenced a process of Area Wide Planning with selected landholder groups throughout the Surat Basin. This invitation-only process aims to enable Arrow and landholders to understand the potential impacts gas field infrastructure may have on farming operations, overland flow on the wider floodplain and address how these impacts can be mitigated or reduced.

Initial meetings were held in two locations in the Surat Basin on 14 December 2012 with a total of 31 stakeholders attending the meetings. A follow up group meeting was held on 7 March 2013 and one-on-one meetings have continued throughout January to March 2013.

Dalby Community Information Centre

In September 2012, Arrow opened a community information centre in Dalby with the purpose of providing an interactive information centre for residents of the Dalby, Western Downs and Darling Downs regions. The centre, which is open daily between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday to Friday, was designed to provide a space where the community can access Arrow staff and information about the company's operations and long-term plans.

The information centre features models, maps and fact sheets that describe Arrow's approach to land access and management of environmental impacts. It also provides a central location for

landholders to meet with Arrow staff and for smaller groups to meet about Arrow's community investment program, 'Brighter Futures'.

Summary of Consultation Activities

A summary of consultation sessions, meetings, key activities and tools used to inform the community throughout phases 5, 6 and 7 are summarised in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Summary of consultation phases and key activities

Consultation Tools and Activities	Phase 5 July 2011 to December 2011	Phase 6 January 2012 to July 2012	Phase 7 August 2012 (ongoing)
Arrow Surat Community Reference Group meetings	✓	✓	✓
Arrow Intensively Farmed Land Committee meetings	✓	✓	✓
Community information sessions	✓	✓	✓
Presentation of agriculture and groundwater assessments	✓	✓	–
Presentation of air, noise and vibration assessments	–	✓	–
Drop-in sessions	–	✓	–
One-on-one briefings/stakeholder meetings	–	–	✓
Shed meetings	–	–	✓
Area-wide planning meetings	–	–	✓
Notice of public exhibition of EIS – various newspaper advertisements	–	✓	–
Notice of public exhibition of EIS – letters to interested and affected persons	–	✓	–
Dalby community information centre establishment	–	–	✓
Community information session advertisements	✓	✓	–
Free phone consultation available	✓	✓	✓
Email contact available	✓	✓	✓
Newspaper advertising	✓	✓	–
Media releases	–	✓	–
Postal/email invitations	✓	✓	–
Website	✓	✓	✓
Information/fact sheets	✓	✓	–
Maps, posters, DVDs, banners	✓	✓	–
Informal community lunches	✓	✓	–

– = Not relevant to the phase.

4.2.2 Communication Materials

A wide range of communication materials have been used to encourage attendance at consultation sessions and to supply stakeholders with information about the project. Copies of these materials are provided in Appendix 1, Supplementary Consultation Report, appendices A and B. An overview of these materials is provided below:

- **Newspaper Advertising.** Advertisements were placed in newspapers distributed within and surrounding the project development area to publicise phase 5 and 6 community information sessions. Advertisements provided details of the 1800 free-call telephone service, website and project email address. During Phase 6, advertisements were also placed in local newspapers to notify the community of the public exhibition of the Surat Gas Project EIS.
- **Posters.** Posters were placed in strategic locations throughout the Surat Basin including Dalby, Chinchilla, Cecil Plains, Miles and Wandoan during phases 5 and 6. These posters provided brief details of the project and outlined locations, dates and times of the information sessions. They also included details for how the community could contact the project team.
- **Media Release and Radio Announcement.** A media release was distributed and community service radio announcements were made to promote the community information sessions and the EIS public exhibition during phases 5 and 6. The release was distributed to local and metropolitan radio stations and newspapers. The community service announcement and media release generated editorial coverage that further promoted the community information sessions and use of the 1800 free-call telephone service.
- **Invitation Letters and Emails.** In both phases 5 and 6, in excess of 3,000 invitation letters and emails promoting the community information sessions were sent to stakeholders listed on Arrow's Consultation Manager database. Stakeholders included people who were invited and/or had attended phases 1, 2, 3 and 4 of consultation, and additional stakeholders added to Arrow's Consultation Manager database since Phase 4.
- **Information Sheets and Fact Sheets.** Project-specific and Queensland Government coal seam gas fact sheets were available at community information sessions.
- **Banners.** Banners that provided a snapshot of key elements of the project were used in project displays during phases 5 and 6.
- **EIS Hard Copy and DVDs.** A hard copy of the EIS and free copies of the DVD containing the EIS were available at the drop-in sessions and community information sessions. Copies of the DVD were also available upon request lodged via the 1800 free-call number, website or the project email address.
- **Maps.** As part of the displays during phases 5 and 6, Arrow's land team had a series of detailed maps on hand showing Arrow's petroleum tenures, which landholders were able to examine. Other maps showed the location of Arrow's current exploration activities, existing infrastructure and Arrow-owned properties.
- **Other Media.** In addition to the above, a 1800 free-call number, website and project email address were maintained to record, manage and track enquiries and action items for the project team throughout all consultation phases. Actions arising from consultation events were managed using an electronic system that issues emails to relevant Arrow employees and is monitored by Arrow. The reply paid postal service also continued to operate.

4.3 Key Issues Raised

Over the course of consultation activities, the response to coal seam gas development has varied within communities, and across the region. Some community members expressed support of development of the industry, particularly due to the employment and business prospects the industry will generate. Other community members have expressed opposition to the project on the grounds of a range of social, economic and environmental concerns. Principal environmental concerns include adverse impacts to groundwater, impacts to Condamine flood plain soils and farming practices, and management of coal seam gas water and brine. Principal social and economic concerns relate to uncertainty about how landholders' properties will be affected, particularly in regard to effects on lifestyle, the future of family businesses and the overall financial viability of agricultural operations.

In some cases, community members have advised that uncertainty related to coal seam gas development is a significant and ongoing source of anxiety and stress, which in turn has impacted on the health of some community members, their family and community relationships. The EIS presented a conceptual development scenario based on ongoing gas reserves assessment and early design. Community members want to understand Arrow's detailed development plans and potential project impacts, both regionally and at a property level. Refinement of field development plans is ongoing with an update presented in the Supplementary Report to the Environmental Impact Statement (SREIS) Chapter 3, Project Description, while planning and negotiation of the siting of wells and associated infrastructure on properties will be ongoing throughout the life of the project.

Some community members have expressed disappointment and in some cases frustration at the staggered delivery of information, i.e., development sequence, groundwater modelling results. The fact that Arrow has not been in the position to provide the detailed level of information sought by the community further adds to their stress and sense of being not adequately informed of the potential impacts of the proposed development. Other community members accept that project planning is still underway and property-level impacts will be resolved through negotiation with individual landholders as the project progresses. As described in Section 4.2.1, Arrow commenced a process of Area Wide Planning in December 2012, which incorporates individual landholder requirements into an integrated plan across regions and catchment areas. Area Wide Planning aims to balance individual needs of landholders with the needs of neighbouring properties and the project.

In summary, key stakeholder issues raised during this period (which are also reflected in formal submissions received on the EIS, as set out in SREIS Part B) included:

- Legislative and regulatory issues, including size and technical nature of the EIS document, the general public's ability to interpret and respond to EIS findings, and ongoing opportunities for public input, e.g., during public notice of applications for environmental authorities.
- Safety issues and noise and air quality impacts associated with coal seam gas production wells and associated infrastructure, including the proximity of infrastructure to houses.
- Impacts to good quality agricultural land, strategic cropping land and IFL, including the potential to alienate soils, disrupt overland flow, generate conflict with agricultural activities and reduce the viability of agricultural production.
- The need to demonstrate that soils on the Condamine Flood Plain can be rehabilitated before project activities commence.

- Coal seam gas water and salt management, including the impacts of treated and untreated coal seam gas water and brine disposal options.
- Impacts to groundwater and obligations on coal seam gas producers to 'make good' on any impacts.
- Compensation for project activities on third-party properties and the influence of the project on property values, existing and future farm plans, and rural amenity and lifestyle.
- Social and economic impacts, such as employment opportunities and pressure on services.

4.4 Ongoing Consultation

Arrow is committed to ongoing engagement with stakeholders and the community throughout the EIS process and beyond. Arrow's planned consultation activities include:

- Continued Arrow Surat Community Reference Group meetings.
- Continued AIFL Committee meetings.
- One-on-one meetings with landholders.
- Further Area Wide Planning group and one-on-one meetings.
- Consultation on the field development scope.
- Maintaining the Community Information Centre in Dalby.
- Community information sessions to provide updates on the project as it progresses.

The communication channels for the project, including the freecall number and email address, will continue to be available.

Stakeholder consultation and engagement continues to be priority for Arrow as the project progresses. Arrow will:

- Continue to engage and communicate with communities.
- Maintain and build relationships with key stakeholders.
- Address stakeholders' concerns to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes.
- Provide information that is relevant, timely, useful and aims to meet the expectations of stakeholders.

Supplementary Report to the Surat Gas Project EIS
Surat Gas Project