Report on community and stakeholder attitudes to onshore natural gas in Victoria

Prepared by the Independent Facilitator,
The Primary Agency
20 April 2015

Better thinking. Better solutions. **Primary.**

Report on community and stakeholder attitudes to onshore natural gas in Victoria

Presented by:
The Primary Agency

20 April 2015

Foreword

In approaching this task, The Primary Agency has maintained a disinterested and independent stance regarding onshore natural gas in Victoria, having no previous experience of the industry.

The Primary Agency has, however, extensive experience of engaging rural and regional communities and has well developed methodologies for understanding community and stakeholder views.

Central to this approach is the notion that to genuinely engage you need to genuinely care for, and respect, the views of the community and all stakeholders.

This style of engagement is ultimately more efficient and effective as it allows for open and extensive consultation which leads to a better understanding of community views and the rationale underpinning those views.

The task was to carefully listen and faithfully record all views expressed and distil them into a report that is useful for decision makers.

It was noteworthy that everyone involved presented their views freely and genuinely.

Mick Maguire
Managing Director
The Primary Agency

The team

The consultation process was an extensive task, the conduct of which involved many members of The Primary Agency team.

Noteworthy for their contribution to the success of the project are:

Ms Keely Chapman
Ms Jill Chapman
Mr Ross Davies
Ms Margie Read Flavell
Mr David Fleming
Dr Bruce Kefford
Ms Pauline Lih-Cham
Mr Mark McDonald
Mr John Naughtin
Ms Victoria Penko
Mr Pete Smith
Mr Richard Surwillo
Mr Mal Wildes
Mr Des Williams
And, Dr Bill Callaghan (market researcher)

The Primary Agency contact:
Ms Margie Read Flavell
email: tpa@theprimaryagency.com

Contents

Executive summary

1. The Primary Agency was engaged as an independent facilitator to conduct a community and stakeholder consultation process to discuss and seek community input on issues surrounding the potential of an onshore natural gas industry in Victoria. The Primary Agency sought to capture the issues and views of Victorian communities through two approaches:

   - an extensive engagement with some 2000 community attendees at open days, key stakeholder meetings, discussion groups and community panels;
   - a quantitative survey of a stratified sample of 960 Victorians which could differentiate the views of respondents in the areas most prospective for gas resources in Western Victoria and Eastern Victoria, rural Victoria and metropolitan Melbourne.

   There was a high level of engagement in the consultation process. Many individuals and companies had strong views which were often well informed and, most participants were interested in getting more information on the subject.

2. The **key question** of the quantitative study was the likelihood of supporting the introduction of an onshore natural gas industry in Victoria. Some 29% of respondents indicated support for the industry (either definitely would or likely to), while 27% of respondents indicated that they do not support the introduction of an onshore natural gas industry. The remaining 44% of respondents indicated they were 'undecided' or 'don't know', which is a high figure. There were only slight differences between metropolitan Melbourne and rural respondents.

3. **Typical viewpoints** can be linked to each of the following three cohorts. The **support** cohort often presents as people with experience in the industry. They foresee an export orientated industry with the commercial and household sectors making the necessary adjustments. They see benefits greatly exceeding costs, landscape change no more intrusive than other uses, an industry with substantial experience in managing environmental risks, and a good track record in the management of landholders.

   The **do not support** cohort fears the industry will profoundly change the landscape and natural resource base for the worse, emphasising ground water depletion and the potential for surface water pollution, land subsidence, the lack of an adequate benefit cost analysis, landscape amenity degradation, and uncertainty about regulatory effectiveness.

   The **undecided/don't know** cohort can be quite well informed but generally they feel that their own knowledge, and perhaps the knowledge actually available, is inadequate to fully assess the issues. When asked to comment on categorical statements about the onshore natural gas industry, the undecided/don't know response could represent anything from an astute judgement of the current state of knowledge through to a cautious assessment of partial knowledge through to a recognition of limited knowledge or even ignorance. This cohort is the largest of the three cohorts. For many significant questions more than 50% of respondents are in this cohort.

4. The **attitudes of respondents** to the major issues underlying onshore natural gas industry development were determined in the survey by presenting respondents with definite statements and seeking responses across a 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree' spectrum. For example, one statement was 'the risks of contamination to surface water from onshore natural gas activities are unacceptably high'. The pattern of responses to these issues questions was often broadly similar to the responses to the key question. The responses are presented at length in this report. Two notable responses were: the need for government control of onshore natural gas activity (70% agree), and the desire for more information (55% interested).

5. **Community attitudes in potentially affected areas** are more strongly opposed to an onshore natural gas industry than in other areas.

   Opposition to an onshore natural gas industry (unlikely to support/definitely would not support) was 46% in the survey sample in the areas most prospective for onshore natural gas as against 27% in the metropolitan sample. The main reasons for this were a greater level of disagreement that the benefits outweighed the costs, and a higher level of concern that the risks to underground water supplies posed by the development of an onshore natural gas are unacceptably high.

   There was a noticeable difference between the Western Victorian prospective gas area and the Eastern Victorian prospective gas area in support for the industry. For almost all of the attitudinal criteria examined, the responses from the western area were less negative towards industry development than those from the eastern area.

6. The **attitudes of key stakeholders** to an onshore natural gas industry were mixed but mostly negative:

   The **Victorian Farmers Federation** position is essentially positive, seeking development subject to: free choice for landholders, adequate management of natural resources, good regulation and fair treatment of landholders. They seek a number of changes to the current situation, most notably, a power of veto for landholders not wanting exploration or development on their land.

   The **dairy industry** expressed concerns about an onshore natural gas industry, fearing negative perceptions in sensitive markets would generate significant risks to markets and milk production. Other concerns were potential contamination of surface water and ground water and its repercussions on milk quality, and the capacity of regulators to manage onshore operators well enough to protect dairy industries.

   Dairy farmers saw some benefits to landholders, but were concerned about the impact of onshore natural gas activities occurring on other farmers' properties on their own farming operations. There were additional concerns about companies gaining access to properties against the wishes of landholders.

   Grain growers' attitudes were largely determined by the potential for an onshore natural gas industry to affect the supply or quality of ground water. If there is no possibility of any impact on water supplies, then onshore natural gas industry development was supported, but if there is any possibility of an impact on ground water then gas industry development was not supported.

   Commercial gas users. A policy change is urgently sought to allow the orderly and managed marketing of gas to the export and domestic markets, to increase competition and transparency in the gas supply market and/or reduce excessive supplier market power.

   Some seek interventions that achieve domestic gas prices closer to the traditional long term trend level. Others seek a managed, effective and more transparent gas market similar to that for electricity.

   Commercial gas users are concerned that the impacts of higher gas prices on industry competitiveness and domestic users will be felt far more rapidly than any impact from the development of an onshore natural gas industry.

7. The **key points** to emerge from the quantitative survey are: a large proportion of the Victorian community (44%) has not adopted a definite position; that the level of opposition in the rural areas with the potential to be affected is high (46%); that there are strong expectations that government will strictly control a potential industry (70%); and, that there is a strong interest in learning more (55%).

Background to the study

For more than four decades Victoria has had an abundant supply of 'conventional' natural gas from offshore, providing cost-effective energy for domestic and commercial uses.

Victoria now has the highest penetration of natural gas in industry and households of any State of Australia. This source of natural gas has been sufficient to also provide for much of Australia's needs via a pipeline linking Tasmania, South Australia, Victoria and Queensland.

The offshore location of this industry is remote from the general population and consequently has had a limited presence locally. Reserves of gas offshore are now declining, although more than 30 years' of supply is estimated to be available, and exploration continues.

Australia has an export focussed market stance for natural gas (and other industries). Where export of gas has been possible, such as Western Australia, domestic users face international gas market price movements.

Export of gas has not previously been possible from eastern Australia and the gas price has been lower and quite stable as a consequence. However, gas processing and shipping developments in Queensland (Qld) mean gas can now be exported as liquefied natural gas (LNG) from eastern Australia and that changes to domestic gas prices could be substantial.

This appears to be happening in the market for medium and long term contracts, but not in spot prices for gas (due to the short term availability of 'ramp up' gas from Queensland gas fields). The effect of gas exports on long term prices may be significantly affected by recent falls in global oil prices and demand for LNG in importing countries.

Overall global demand for natural gas demand is growing, although this is not the situation for domestic demand on the Australian east coast. The growing demand and higher returns from export markets, combined with extensive experience of industry development in other countries, has stimulated interest in exploration and development of the onshore natural gas industry in Australia.

The onshore natural gas industry is well established in other countries (particularly the USA); there is a long history of production from Australia's Cooper Basin, which straddles both South Australia (SA) and Queensland (Qld); and, there has been further, more recent, development in Qld and New South Wales (NSW), all of which provides insights into its operations and characteristics.

Onshore natural gas is not produced in Victoria and it is no known if there are commercially viable resources, although some exploration has occurred in past decades. A moratorium on further exploration and the practice of hydraulic fracturing was put in place in 2012 and extended until at least June 2015, pending State government consideration of a number of studies and community consultation (reported here). In January 2015, the Victorian Government announced that the moratorium would remain in place pending the establishment of a Parliamentary Inquiry into onshore unconventional gas and the Government's subsequent response to the Inquiry's findings.

Certain regions of Victoria (e.g. Gippsland and the Otway Basin), have underlying geology which is potentially suitable for some forms of onshore natural gas, notably gas trapped in sandstone (tight gas) or in shale (shale gas). Gas from coal deposits (coal seam gas) is also possible but its potential in Victoria may not be as significant as in other States of Australia.

These regions are in rural Victoria; they are relatively closely settled, often very productive, have high amenity value and support a range of industries including food and agriculture, tourism, recreation, as well as aluminium smelting, coal mining, power generation and associated service industries.

Agriculture in Victoria is particularly intensive with 26% of Australia's food and agriculture being produced from just 3% of the nation's arable land. Victoria dominates in a number of these industries including dairying, prime lamb production and certain crops which generate high returns per hectare.

Victoria's more extensive use of natural gas as an energy source in industry and households sets it apart from other states.

The onshore natural gas community consultation process

In April 2014, The Primary Agency was engaged as Independent Facilitator of an extensive community consultation program aimed at gaining a deeper understanding of the Victorian community's issues and range of views about onshore natural gas, particularly in those areas where the geology suggests onshore natural gas might be present.

Consultation objective

The Primary Agency's objective throughout the consultation has been:

> *'To capture the issues and views of Victorian communities with regards to onshore natural gas and report those faithfully to government.'*

The consultation was designed in two distinct phases:

Phase One: Consultation

This initial stage of our program reached into communities in which onshore natural gas is likely to/may be present (primarily through regional open days and stakeholder and community meetings in Gippsland, South West Victoria and some areas of Northern Victoria).

Phase Two: Validation

We then aimed to validate, further explore and deepen our understanding of the perspectives we had heard, in regionally based discussions, through state-wide quantitative market research and in two specially convened community panels.

The consultation was designed to be accessible to all those interested in taking part. We note the significant efforts that many Victorians made to volunteer their time and effort to meet with us and discuss their perspectives of onshore natural gas. We thank everyone who has contributed to this important process.

Our role as an Independent Facilitator in this consultation has been critical in gaining the trust of Victorian communities and stakeholders. The Primary Agency has no prior involvement in the mining and extraction industries. Moreover, we have been vigilant in our efforts to maintain a neutral *disinterested* perspective, including in our consultation methodologies, our questioning and in all communications. Importantly, we have been extremely careful not to coach or lead opinion in any direction.

Consultation activity

Phase One

The first phase of the consultation process involved actively listening to the community's issues and views about onshore natural gas.

Open Days

Initially, 14 Open Days were planned to take place in geographical areas possibly prospective for onshore natural gas. This number was later extended to 16 Open Days to ensure that reasonable access had been provided to everyone in the targeted consultation areas.

We intended that everyone within these areas could attend an Open Day within a two hour drive. Sessions took place between June and August from 2pm until 8pm each evening.

The Open Days, advertised in local media, provided a chance for community members to meet with facilitators and then, if they wished, talk directly with staff (e.g. hydrologists and engineers) from the Department of State Development, Business and Innovation (now the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources). The schedule of Open Days is shown in Appendix 1.

More than 1,500 people expressed their views as part of the Open Day program, as outlined below:

- more than 700 participants in Warragul, Sale, Bairnsdale, Yarram, Inverloch, Mirboo North and Traralgon
- more than 650 participants in Torquay, Casterton, Colac, Terang and Heywood
- more than 100 participants in Cullulleraine and Murrayville
- more than 70 participants in Wangaratta and Numurkah

Wherever appropriate, before each Open Day, independent facilitation staff held meetings with both local government and representatives of community groups. These included 14 meetings with shire council representatives and 15 with community groups, including those most vocal in their opposition to onshore natural gas development in Victoria.

Stakeholder meetings

Facilitators also had discussions with parties or individuals identified as being significantly interested in, or impacted by, any future onshore natural gas development in Victoria, to ensure stakeholder and sectorial interests were fully captured.

These discussions lasted one to two hours. Two lead consultation facilitators attended each meeting.
A schedule of these discussions is shown in Appendix 2.

Phase Two

The second phase of the consultation involved validating, further exploring and deepening our understanding of the perspectives we had heard.

Community and stakeholder discussions

Community and stakeholder discussion groups, held in late 2014, were designed to ensure that the consultation had captured the broadest range of views from all sectors of the community.

Preliminary assessment of feedback from the Open Days showed that they reflected a broad cross-section of Victorian communities.

However, it was clear that the Open Day process had not captured enough qualitative data from commercial farmers to accurately characterise that sector. Hence, of the discussion groups held across the State, a number were specifically intended to collect commercial farming operators' views.

Some of the discussion groups were used as a means of revisiting people who had attended the open days and community meetings, to ensure that we had accurately recorded and understood emerging themes and arguments. We were then able to better understand the basis of differing perspectives.

Community panels

The Primary Agency convened two community panels in October – one for Gippsland and another for South West Victoria – to further explore the themes and insights drawn from the broader community consultation process.

These panels consisted of organisations and advocates representing interest groups and communities. Each panel comprised participants whose views broadly mirrored the diversity of community and stakeholder views across the region, including those with strongly differing perspectives about onshore natural gas.

The Primary Agency, as Independent Facilitator, selected participants by invitation. Participants agreed to a 'set of behaviours' that ensured respect for all views within a forum which would be unlikely to occur in any other scenario. Discussions were effectively treated as being 'in camera'.

The Primary Agency sought nominees from key stakeholder groups, prior participants and those who showed significant interest in the earlier consultation process, notably the Open Days. Stakeholders included environment, advocacy, community, industry, local government, landholders, tourism and natural resource management agencies.

Considerable care was taken to assemble each panel to ensure a comprehensive coverage of sectorial views.

The community panels attempted to:

- explore themes and insights which emerged during the broader consultation process.
- explore divergent views on a range of subjects relating to onshore natural gas. These included perspectives on general water and environmental issues, science and technology, energy policy, regulation and the coexistence of community, landholders with any potential onshore natural gas industry.
- identify and confirm areas where different stakeholders hold common and contrasting views. This included having regard to possible risks and risk mitigation measures, as well as any possible residual risks posed by a potential onshore natural gas industry.

  No provision was made for observers from government or media within these panels, to ensure a confidential and secure forum for issues to be explored.

Quantitative market research

In addition to the qualitative feedback provided by the community during the consultation process, a fully statistically valid quantitative market research study was conducted and is reported here.

Community views on the development of onshore natural gas

Part A – The qualitative study

The qualitative component of this report is drawn from the extensive engagement of the Primary Agency with community attendees at open days, key stakeholders, discussion groups and the community panels.

The overwhelming impression created was that the participants represented their views with conviction. Most were very considered in their views and a number were quite passionate, describing very strong feelings about particular issues.

For what is a technically complex topic, many participants were well informed about the processes of onshore natural gas and the related issues, having drawn information from a range of sources (literature, media, web, academics, direct industry experience and specific interest groups). Others readily admitted limitations to their knowledge of the field. Most people displayed a keen desire to understand more.

This issue has galvanised the interest of people who described themselves as 'never having been involved in any community issue before' and quite a number also insisted that they were not 'greenies'. A theme expressed consistently by participants was great appreciation for the opportunity to be heard and the hope their views would be considered genuinely by authorities.

Community views about onshore natural gas

The views expressed by some 2000 participants and the rationale behind those views is consolidated here. This is made possible because the community essentially divides into three cohorts: *those **who do not support** the development of onshore natural gas for Victoria, those who **support** this development and those who are yet to form a definite position and are **undecided/don't know**.*

The level of community support on this and many other issues is discussed in detail in the following chapter on the quantitative analysis, but in overview almost half the community are in the *undecided/don't know* cohort, and the other half is split between do *not support and support.*

Characteristics of the *do not support* cohort

People in this cohort fear the industry will profoundly and permanently change the landscape, natural resource base, structure of the economy and community character for the worse.

This view is centred on natural resource and local or regional community considerations. Benefits from onshore natural gas are perceived to be limited and when set against the substantial risks and costs provide little net benefit if any overall. Further, the benefits and costs are not seen to be distributed equitably, with the benefits accruing mainly outside the region, while the costs are mainly borne inside the region.

The extensive range of potential costs and risks – drawn from previous experience elsewhere and case studies – when combined with a low appetite for risk, leads to a strong conviction that onshore natural gas is a thoroughly bad idea for Victoria now, and probably in the future. This strong belief leads to surprise and/or suspicion of those with contrary views. Authorities – particularly politicians, government agencies, scientific organisations or the industry itself – that countenance the possibility of an onshore natural gas industry in Victoria are often criticised for a lack of understanding, capability or independence, due to a financial or commercial stake in the development of the onshore natural gas industry.

Perspectives of those who *do not support*

Policy stance

The export orientation of the market arrangements for onshore natural gas in Australia is seen to expose the eastern seaboard's domestic gas market to international price movements in the future (most likely upwards). Current policy does not favour any gas reservation for domestic market purposes and, as a consequence, there is no expectation that the development of onshore natural gas will deliver lower prices in Victoria.

The promotion of onshore natural gas development is inconsistent with other government policies to promote regional agriculture, food and tourism industries, given the substantial loss of landscape amenity that will occur.

Need for development

The notion that natural gas should be further developed is challenged on the grounds that the existing offshore reserves are adequate for at least 30 years and this is sufficient time to move to renewable energy sources, particularly if the government investment is redirected. It is claimed that this would help mitigate climate change effects and create more jobs than the onshore natural gas industry.

Some feel that onshore natural gas should be kept as a reserve for future base-load energy production, allowing more time to explore the risks and also potentially increase the value of the resource if it was needed and extracted later.

Benefits and costs

An extensive range of costs and risks are characterised, while the scale and nature of the benefits are challenged. This leads to the overall view that the potential costs greatly exceeded the benefits.

Furthermore, the benefits are seen to accrue over a shorter time (decades) and to a few, largely living outside the region. The costs however will generally accrue over a much longer time (generations) to those living within the regions. This segregation of benefits from costs in time and space is seen as very unfair.

The anticipated increases in gas price are seen as a function of a need to meet international contracts and Australia's consequent exposure to the price traded on world markets. Lower domestic gas prices, as a consequence of increased supply from onshore natural gas, is not considered a reality.

The benefit/cost analysis undertaken to-date has been inadequate, estimating some of the tangible benefits and only some costs. Many other often less tangible costs, including collateral impacts to other industries and changes within communities are overlooked or minimised. The potential changes to the character of the regional economy and community needs to be considered carefully in any benefit/cost analysis.

The tendency, in the past, for the industry to overestimate returns was also mentioned, highlighting the need for adequate risk/return and sensitivity analyses.

The basic resources that are crucially important for regional industries such as agriculture and tourism (e.g. land, water, air and the amenity of the environment) will be reduced in quality and quantity affecting their viability and productivity and significantly reducing the net benefits.

The perceived quality and reputation of regional products and product brands based on the existing features of the region (e.g. clean and green) will be eroded if the landscape becomes industrialised. This will reduce their value and potentially deny access to higher value markets. This is a particular concern for milk products.

Certain forms of insurance are also reported not to be available to landholders hosting onshore natural gas activities.

Landscape change

The onshore natural gas industry in other locations is seen as having a very substantial and long lasting footprint in both its development and operational phases, as well as after extraction is complete.

The industrial nature of onshore natural gas is in stark contrast to many of the current land uses (e.g. agriculture, tourism, residential, amenity), changing the landscape it occupies profoundly.

In the presence of onshore natural gas, other land uses are significantly affected, devalued and/or displaced and, as a result, a compatible co-existence with other land uses is not possible.

Once any onshore natural gas activities begin, even on a small scale, impacts on the surrounds are immediately felt and further onshore natural gas development is seen as inevitable as other land uses are devalued.

Negative impacts cited include land lost to other important uses, impacts on amenity and lifestyle, noise, visual impacts, increased heavy traffic, road damage, increased fire risk and private or public asset devaluation.

Natural resources

The industry is very intrusive, often requiring access to private land, deep drilling and large volumes of water.

There is deep concern the water sources will be diminished in quality and availability for other uses, as hydraulic fracturing (fracking) requires large volumes of water and the use of chemicals. Some of the water used is returned to the surface containing additional salt and other substances from underground, to be stored at the surface where it remains a threat to land, water courses, stock and wildlife.

Deep drilling and fracking affects the structural integrity of the subsurface environment, potentially leading to:

fugitive gas escaping to the air, adding to greenhouse effects, increasing fire risk and health impacts

- fugitive gas escaping to the air, adding to greenhouse effects, increasing fire risk and health impacts
- increased seismic activity in areas of geological instability
- potential contamination of underground aquifers with fracking fluids
- loss of access to ground water for other uses.

As evidence that these concerns are real, particular cases in United States, Queensland or New South Wales are used to highlight the risks and impacts. In Victoria, aquifer depletion in the Yarram region, as a consequence of offshore gas extraction and coal mining, is well known. This has also raised concerns about potential land subsidence.

As these impacts can extend beyond the boundaries of a landholder, externalities can be created for others not immediately involved in onshore natural gas

Character of the regional economy

While there are industrialised parts of these regions, most of the landscape is devoted to food and agriculture, tourism, services and residential living. An onshore natural gas industry of any scale is expected to substantially affect the current mix of activities in regional economies as onshore natural gas grows and other activities decline or change.

Character of the regional community

Just as the economy changes so too does the community that supports it. People once attracted to a more bucolic existence may now be facing a more industrialised environment that substantially affects their way of life and appreciation of the surrounds. The makeup of the community will also change to reflect those who are attracted to the changed environment and those who choose to stay.

Capacity to understand and manage risks

There is a concern that with this relatively new industry, the science and management experience is insufficient to be able to predict, with any certainty, the potential risks and their management.

Some government agencies and scientific authorities are described as lacking sufficient independence as a result of being under political influence or being compromised by funding arrangements with the industry. There is also a strong focus on the gaps in scientific knowledge rather than the extent of the existing knowledge.

There is a very low risk appetite for onshore natural gas, with assurances or guarantees being sought that negative events will not occur leading to calls for the 'precautionary principle' to be applied before proceeding.

Capability to manage onshore natural gas impacts

There is a strong focus on the risks associated with the industry and the capability of regulators to mitigate them through regulation or industry codes of practice. This concern has three distinct aspects: the potential to design effective regulations for this industry, the capability of the regulator(s) to ensure that industry complies with regulations, and the behaviour of industry operators. More specifically, the capacity of the regulators to manage the development and operations of the industry is regularly questioned in regard to:

- regulatory powers and their stability over time, given the capacity for governments to change them
- low and declining regulatory resources which are seen as inadequate relative to the scale of the task
- poor industry reputation and past performance (reported cases of industry poor practice or where accidents have occurred are seen as regulatory failure and point towards other possible failures)
- industry codes of practice which are not taken seriously as they are voluntary and cannot prevent instances of bad practice
- the international and footloose nature of some companies and the inability to enforce compliance if the company becomes bankrupt
- the inadequacy of rehabilitation bonds to cover the full range and costs of rehabilitation over the extended period of time during which they can emerge

- the possibility of risks and liabilities being transferred from the companies to landholders, the community or the State before their effects emerge
- unforeseen risks and liabilities emerging after the event, citing that many landholders regret agreeing to the onshore natural gas arrangements after their impacts are clearer.

A sense of fairness

The absence of a 'power of veto' for landholders in Australia to prevent exploration and mining on their land often surprises landholders and adds to a sense of an imbalance of power in their negotiations with industry (who can refer the compensation amount to VCAT for resolution).

There is a widespread perception that landholders can be bullied in the negotiations with industry, disadvantaged in the compensation for loss of production, and risk inadequate restoration after the event. (Note: Minerals are owned by the state on behalf of the whole community with compensation payable for access under established Victorian law. Australian landholders do not receive royalties from onshore natural gas whereas they do in some states of the USA.).

Community knowledge and consultation

This do not support cohort feel the wider population is much less informed about onshore natural gas and so, are consequently less concerned than communities more directly affected. Previous attempts by industry and government to inform and engage the community are described as 'non-existent' or very limited. However the information from interest groups has usually been welcomed and has been influential in shaping views.

Health

Instances of moderate to severe physical and mental health issues associated with onshore natural gas are described, drawing from other countries, Queensland and New South Wales. These include reports of skin, eye, respiratory and gastrointestinal inflammations plus effects on the nervous, immune and cardiovascular systems as well as hormonal imbalances, possible cancers and genetic mutations.

Characteristics of the *support* cohort

People in this cohort typically have extensive and longstanding experience in the oil and gas industry, may invest in it and/or may be or have been employed in it.

They have a relatively detailed understanding of the industry and draw on experiences from the offshore gas industry and on shore exploration over more than four decades in Victoria. This is often combined with knowledge of the onshore gas industry in other countries and other states in Australia.

Given these experiences, they see high potential in onshore gas for Victoria, Australia and globally, with flow-on benefits to other industries and the local and wider community.

This cohort sees large potential benefits that will significantly outweigh the costs of a well-managed onshore natural gas industry. This view is underpinned by a greater appetite for risk and a belief that the industry can manage whatever risks might present.

The extensive experience of the industry and its claimed good practice over decades supports a basic conviction that developing onshore natural gas in Victoria is a thoroughly good idea. Those with contrary views are regarded as not understanding the true nature of the industry or as anti-development activists.

However, this cohort also recognises that the industry is often poorly perceived in the wider community, both in Australia and internationally. The Gas Market Taskforce report noted that gaining a 'social licence to operate' was probably the biggest single constraint on industry growth, both in Australia and internationally.

The industry sees roles for government in particular and also itself in managing this issue. It is noteworthy that landholders with direct experience working with gas companies in Victoria are reported to have a positive view of the companies involved.

The present consultation is strongly supported, but there is also frustration with the moratorium on onshore natural gas development in Victoria and the uncertainty in government policy, which is believed to have constrained investment.

Perspectives of those who *support*

Policy stance

Onshore natural gas is perceived as a very important source of cleaner energy for both manufacturing and domestic uses.

The *support* cohort generally has a good understanding of Australian gas marketing arrangements and the implications of export-based pricing for gas prices domestically.

There is no support for the reservation of gas for the domestic market despite the predicted increases in price that are likely to follow, and the corresponding impact on manufacturing and households once the east coast of the country enters the world market. Rather, price increases for manufacturers and household users are seen as an inevitable consequence of a foreseeable and necessary adjustment to new market circumstances.

Benefit to the economy and community regionally

The supportive cohort believes the benefits greatly outweigh the costs to the Victorian community and that this is often not understood by the community. The community is held to be unaware how greater supply could reduce gas prices in their favour, and of holding an exaggerated concept of the adverse effects of an onshore natural gas industry.

The development of the Queensland industry (Chinchilla, Toowoomba and Roma) over the past 10 to 30 years, and development of the industry in the USA, are all cited as positive case studies for how an onshore natural gas industry might unfold in Victoria. These Queensland towns are said to have gained substantially overall, with new jobs, water for agriculture and the environment, better infrastructure, improved services for the community, a more viable local economy and a more vibrant community.

The distribution of benefits to landholders is claimed to be fair and reasonable, as illustrated by the fact that 4,000 holes have been drilled in Queensland without recourse to legal action. The compensation negotiated has more than covered landholders' loss of income, and landholders are said to be happy with the arrangements.

Landscape change

The industry believes that best practice developments are much less intrusive, and no more so, than many other land uses. The amenity of the environment in some areas of Queensland has been improved by the increased availability of clean irrigation water from treated recovered water.

Natural resources

There are more than four decades of offshore gas experience in a more difficult environment than onshore for gas capture, and a proven track record of good industry performance. The environmental risks are well understood and well managed, with newer technologies further reducing risks.

More than 40,000 holes having been drilled in Victoria over past decades (many for coal) which provides extensive experience of, and evidence for, the reliability of drilling practices. Further, drilling for gas penetrates far deeper than the aquifers used as water sources for human, agricultural and industry uses, reducing risks of contamination.

The gas industry believes that the Queensland experience with onshore natural gas over recent decades has shown few negative environmental impacts and positive benefits from increased irrigation. The potentially adverse environmental aspects of an onshore natural gas industry need to be assessed against the impacts of decades of other land uses, such as the fertilisers, pesticides and weedicides used in agriculture.

Capacity to understand and manage the risks

The science in this field is excellent, long standing and exchanged worldwide. With continued development globally, improvements in technology (e.g. in fracking) are further reducing already low risks. If the extent of this scientific knowledge, experience and track record was more widely understood by general community, many concerns would be reduced.

Capacity to manage onshore natural gas impacts

Industry regulation is extensive and appropriate. When this regulation is combined with industry codes of practice and the good internal processes of individual companies, it effectively protects the community and its assets while allowing the industry to develop.

A sense of fairness

Companies in the onshore natural gas sector highly respect and value their relationships with landholders, taking particular care to develop understanding, reach agreement and provide follow-up after their activities have been completed.

No attempt is made to force the issue with landholders or to use the legal pathway available via the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal. Some companies make efforts to build relationships with local communities by investing in a range of activities, such as sponsorships of sporting clubs.

Community knowledge and consultation

Previous government attention to community education and consultation is seen as partial, slow, insufficient and ineffective and as having contributed to the high level misinformation within the community.

The community concerns being expressed can often be attributed to this high level of misinformation. Similarly, company investment in community education resources and programs over the years has been inadequate and has produced mixed results, so that all parties believe more engagement and better understanding is required.

Health

Companies acknowledge that they owe a duty of care to landholders and the wider community in developing onshore natural gas resources. They also point out that they have similar legal responsibilities to their staff, many of whom would have much higher exposures to any operating risks than landholders or the community.

Companies see no increased incidence of health issues as a consequence of onshore natural gas operations (e.g. the South Australian operations). However, there are reports of health issues that are considered to be unrelated to industry activities, and claims to the contrary are not supported by credible medical authorities.

Two world views

Both the *do not support* and *support* cohorts claim to draw on a good information base and both can provide substantial supporting evidence.

They are each convinced they are right and that they act in 'the community interest'; both are suspicious of the motivations of those with contrary views.

These two cohorts hold different 'world views', which draw on different value sets, knowledge and experiences. In this respect the divergence of opinion about onshore natural gas development has similarities to other conservation versus development issues within the Australian community.

A striking example of these two viewpoints is the different perspectives on the development of the onshore natural gas industry at Chinchilla in Queensland.

Those not *supportive* of onshore natural gas characterise industry development in Chinchilla as a disaster. They see a once bucolic and productive rural landscape that has been utterly destroyed to make way for an industrial landscape, many farmers have been forced to leave, and others are trapped on unsaleable properties, while the farmers who opted for the development now regret it.

Those *supportive* of onshore natural gas see an entirely different picture: a once moribund agricultural landscape has been rejuvenated and transformed by the onshore natural gas industry with increased and more diverse economic activity, improved water supplies for natural resources and agricultural uses, and better community services.

The provision of more, high quality information is unlikely to shift the viewpoint of either cohort in any substantial way.

Characteristics of the *undecided/don't know* cohort

TThe report of the quantitative survey (reported here) makes the distinction between an undecided group who responded 'may or may not' or 'neither agree or disagree', and a 'don't know' group who responded 'don't know'. It is important to recognise that these are two separate groups, even though for purposes such as the development of government policy or for convenience in discussion they can be treated as one group, as is often the case in this report.

It is significant that on many important questions these two groups, when combined, are the largest cohort within the community, and as such the *undecided/don't know* response must be given adequate attention.

The undecided group see some merit in the perspectives emerging from the two polarised groupings within their community. People in this cohort may range from quite well informed through to not very well informed, but they generally feel that their knowledge is inadequate to fully appreciate the issues and they are keen to learn more.

Few actually possess a comprehensive knowledge of the issues, but this group is more aware of knowledge deficiencies and is usually less articulate as a result. They worry about the polarisation of views within their communities and do not know who to believe, often turning to authorities for more reliable information.

They are more accommodating of diverse sources of information and more accepting of the role of authorities, such as scientific and government agencies. And at this point, they are uncertain about whether and how an onshore natural gas industry might be developed.

Some within this undecided grouping have an open but conditional stance on the development of the onshore natural gas industry in Victoria. They focus on how the industry might be allowed to develop and the controls that would be necessary to mitigate risks. They have some faith that government could achieve this, but have a general sense that more needs to be done to make this industry 'safe'.

Others are concerned primarily with environmental, water and amenity concerns but are nevertheless very conscious of the need for local job creation and development opportunities.

Greater knowledge often assists in reaching decisions in these situations.

The don't know group is likely to include those who are less engaged in the issue, are less informed or uninformed on the issue, and less interested because of other concerns. However, *don't know* is a rational alternative to *undecided* where the question requires knowledge which is not available at present or limited in scope.

Thus, for the views expressed to "the risks to underground water supplies from onshore natural gas are unacceptably high", there was a 39% *don't know* response and 20% undecided response, which is so high it is indicative of a community response that these risks cannot be assessed, rather than simply a lack of interest or capacity to assess them. The provision of more high quality information might assist this *undecided/don't know* cohort in taking a more definite position one way or the other

Perspectives of those who are *undecided/don't know*

The perspectives of the undecided/don't know cohort were not very apparent at community consultations, but they are more readily accessible from the quantitative survey data. The following list of questions and statements from the survey drew a combined response of 'undecided/don't know' from more than 50% of respondents:

- likelihood of supporting the introduction of an onshore natural gas industry in Victoria
- the potential benefits of onshore natural gas outweigh the potential costs and risks
- an onshore natural gas industry in Victoria would ensure lower prices for natural gas for households
- tourism in parts of country Victoria would be negatively affected by onshore natural gas activities
- the impact on agriculture in Victoria would be negative
- farmers and other landowners could get better returns if there was an onshore natural gas industry in their area
- any risks involved in onshore natural gas operations are low
- the risks of contamination to surface water from onshore natural gas activities are unacceptably high
- the risks to underground water supplies from onshore natural gas are unacceptably high
- there are no public health issues likely to arise from being near onshore natural gas activities
- there would be no health issues for those living near onshore natural gas operations
- the technology involved in onshore natural gas is proven scientifically
- onshore natural gas activities would be divisive or disruptive in the local communities where they might be located
- the onshore natural gas industry would damage the views/visual amenity in the Victorian countryside
- farmers and other landowners would be adequately compensated for any onshore natural gas disruption to their farming and other operations
- companies that might be in the onshore natural gas business cannot be trusted.

This is a significant list of questions and statements relating to a possible onshore natural gas industry for which a majority of Victorians do not believe there is sufficient basis for them to make a decision or know the answer.

Consider further the question "*the risks to underground water supplies from onshore natural gas are unacceptably high*". The risks from offshore gas extraction following 50 years of experience are well known, but for onshore natural gas the assessment of risks must rely on current knowledge and experience, and a well-informed judgement.

For onshore natural gas, the level of certainty possible in risk assessment is lower, well informed judgements can differ substantially, and a *'don't know'* or 'undecided' response could be a reasonable and cautious response in this situation. The fact that about half of a well-structured sample of the Victorian population is providing don't know/undecided answers to searching questions about onshore natural gas industry development is an indication of where community opinion is at this time and it cannot be ignored or dismissed as unworthy of further attention.

Key areas of disagreement within the community

The consultation process revealed some key areas of strong disagreement within the community at this point in time. An overview of these key areas is provided below.

Benefits and costs

The potential of net gain from an onshore natural gas industry in Victoria is strongly disputed and includes considerations of benefits relative to costs, to whom they accrue and over what time period.

The stated benefits include: the revenue streams to the mining companies, the State and landholders; increased economic activity within the State generally; better regional services and employment opportunities; and benefits to agriculture, manufacturing and natural resources.

The stated costs include: damage to natural resources, especially water sources; collateral impacts on other industries (such as tourism and agriculture); negative biodiversity impacts; negative impacts on residential and recreational amenity, and changes to the regional economy and community character.

These benefits are seen as accruing over the medium term (10-15 years) and to companies and individuals remote from the regions affected, while the cost burden is seen to accrue over the longer term (perhaps generations) to be borne by the regional communities affected. This separation of benefits and costs in time and space can be seen as inequitable or not relevant depending on the viewpoint taken.

A striking feature of this situation is that, as yet, there is no comprehensive economic analysis of the benefits and costs to Victoria of an onshore natural gas development. There would be complex valuation challenges but a competent economic analysis would be a vast improvement on the current situation of claim and counter claim.

Capacity of the legislative and regulatory system

Governments, acting for the community, use legislation and regulation to oversight and control the development and practices of industries such as onshore natural gas. The powers, resources and capacity of the regulator have been consistently drawn into question throughout the consultation, but the quantitative survey reveals high community expectations about regulatory control of the onshore natural gas industry.

While supporters of onshore natural gas development regard the current legislation and regulations as substantial and appropriate, and supported by industry codes of practice, many others see the current regulatory instruments in Victoria (e.g. *Petroleum Act 1988 and the Mineral Resources Sustainable Development Act 1990*) as inadequate, and suggest that better models exist in other Australian states and overseas. One academic's view on potential regulatory reform is offered later in this chapter.

Access to land

The potential for imbalance of power in the negotiations between the mining companies and the landholders is a major source of community concern.

Negotiating processes for access to gas resources on private land are often characterised as being 'in favour' of the mining companies. This is because of the superior knowledge and experience of the companies, the commercial-in-confidence agreements with landholders, the legislated powers to access land and the capacity to refer compensation disputes to VCAT.

While exploration companies technically have the right to access to private land for exploration, they state they are reluctant to use it. Rather, they prefer to work cooperatively with landholders who are interested in development.

The number of agreements in-place in other states and the absence of cases referred to VCAT are offered as evidence that this is effective. The potential for an imbalance of power has been recognised in Queensland and New South Wales where codes of practice have been established to help ensure effective negotiation occurs between companies and landholders.

Energy market arrangements and their consequences

National energy policy makes no provision for the reservation of gas for domestic users at prices below those obtainable in export markets (noting that Western Australia does reserve gas but not at a lower price). It has been stated that, in an era of rising export prices in the longer term the gas industry will be firmly focussed on the more lucrative export market.

With the commencement of export from the eastern seaboard it is anticipated that when gas supply contracts are renewed the price of gas will reflect the higher export pricing available in Asian markets. The availability of gas to domestic consumers could be an issue at times.

The effect of these changes on domestic commercial gas users and on household users will be significant, especially for industry users without energy alternatives. It can be anticipated that a return to coal derived energy is likely for users without alternatives.

The changes will cause significant distress in the household sector, and especially in lower income households. Some will argue that this is a natural market adjustment; others will argue that there is little competition or transparency in the gas market and a marked imbalance of power in favour of suppliers, and others will point to the gas industry and its participants as the principal beneficiaries of the changes, to the detriment of the general community.

A decision about onshore natural gas development in Victoria is likely to take place in the context of this highly charged atmosphere.

Risk management

The extent to which potential risks associated with onshore natural gas development are understood and able to be mitigated has been prominent in the community engagement.

Attitudes to the adequacy of scientific understanding of the risks of onshore natural gas are sharply divided. Risk appetites also vary considerably, with proponents of the industry being less risk averse and much more confident that risks can be mitigated than the opponents.

Proponents of onshore natural gas point to decades of offshore – and onshore – industry experience, and to high levels of reliability. They highlight continually improving technology as further mitigating these risks.

However, opponents highlight prominent cases of 'industry failure' attributed to the science, the regulation, or both being found wanting and failing to protect individuals and the community from significant impacts. Proponents and opponents both point to scientific evidence and 'credible and independent scientific authorities' in support of their positions. It seems that scientific evidence is necessary but not sufficient in itself to resolve these complex administrative decisions.

The appeal to scientific authorities is also complicated by disputes as what constitutes a 'credible and independent scientific authority'. Organisations such as CSIRO have relevant expertise and arguably have a very good reputation and public standing for science quality and independence. However, some participants felt that there was a conflict of interest wherever any scientific organisation accepted funding from relevant industries and, as a consequence, their advice should be discounted.

Substantial difficulties arise for decision-makers in policy issues when the advice of scientific authorities can be disqualified on this basis.

Attitudes of key stakeholders

Victorian Farmers Federation

The Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) policy position[1] on the development of onshore natural gas is one of 'free choice' for landholders. The VFF emphasises managing risks to natural resources, good regulation of industry development and its ongoing operations, and the fair treatment of landholders involved.

It does not feel current arrangements deliver the above and seek the following changes:

- a power of veto for landholders not wanting exploration or development on their land
- more transparency in negotiations and more equality in negotiating power for landholders relative to the companies
- adequate compensation for landholders and local communities
- minimal external impacts for neighbours and communities adjacent to onshore natural gas exploration or development
- assurances risks will be managed and monitored
- regulation that will be effective in controlling industry development.

Dairy industry leadership group (manufacturers, ADIC, ADPF, UDV)

Dairy manufacturers are very large energy users and increasingly large natural gas users. Given the scale of their energy requirements they have analysed energy the markets thoroughly.

Dairy manufacturers all see the possibility of onshore natural gas in Victoria as a peripheral issue in terms of reducing the gas price, which they view as primarily determined by the export price. However, they are greatly concerned about the associated risks to markets and milk production.

There is a great deal of sensitivity to market perceptions of Victoria as a natural production zone changing for the worse with the development of an onshore natural gas industry, leading to damage to the reputation of Victorian/Australian product in valuable and sensitive markets. Fears were expressed that "the loss of markets will swamp and any gains from natural gas."

Dairy industry organisations were focussed on the risks to key resources and in particular, contamination of water and its repercussions. The implications for other farmers and the wider industry when individual farmers become involved with onshore natural gas was also a major concern.

[1] Source: The VFF's Mining and Petroleum Policy Principles, VFF, April 2015.

There was concern about the extent to which the 'science' was sufficiently understood to manage the risks of onshore natural gas, but support for credible scientific organisations such as CSIRO as advisors in these matters.

The capacity for the regulators to manage the 'worst performers' and thereby protect industries and the community was seriously questioned, referring to a number of failures as evidence and the risks to an industry of even one isolated event.

Dairy farmer discussion groups (Gippsland)

Dairy farmer participants declared a limited knowledge of onshore natural gas and a desire to learn more, as well as articulating suspicion about the 'anti or activist' information they had received.

They recognised a number of concerns but were generally more open minded to the possibility that onshore natural gas in Victoria could have benefits to the wider community and to them as landholders.

The concerns raised include possible impacts on the quality of milk, and on the availability and price of key natural resource inputs, especially water. Other concerns were the impacts of onshore natural gas activities on other farmers' lands and how this could affect their activities through changes in water, subsidence, and amenity.

Another concern raised was whether dairy farming and onshore natural gas development could coexist effectively on their own land.

The potential capacity of companies to gain access to properties against the wishes of the landholders was a concern, as was the ability to drill from a neighbour's farm under their own property.

There was limited faith in the capacity of regulators to effectively manage the development of the industry (coming off the back of the recent open cut mine fire near Morwell in late 2014), and perhaps more faith in the ability of individual farmers to satisfactorily negotiate with companies.

Parallels were drawn with wind farms, and the potential to receive additional revenue while continuing to farm were seen as attractive, but assurances that 'it was safe' and that other impacts could be managed were sought.

Independent scientific authorities were seen as important in providing these assurances and organisations such as CSIRO were considered reliable. The wider economic benefit to the community of the development of onshore natural gas was generally seen as good, particularly the extra jobs that could be available.

Grain growers (Western and North Western Victoria)

The attitude of grain growers was generally determined by the perception of the potential for the onshore natural gas industry to affect the supply or quality of ground water.

In situations where the local ground water was not going to be affected by onshore natural gas operations due to the nature of local aquifers, grain growers were supportive of development due to the possibility of an alternative income stream that was independent of the fluctuations of farm incomes, as well as the broader possibility of increased economic activity, employment and industry diversification for the region.

This view was influenced by the fact that many growers had seen these benefits from wind farming and rare earth mining in their area. This was generally seen to be well managed, even though the employment opportunities were greater during the industry establishment phase.

A good example of this situation is the region around Cullulleraine where the water supply is piped overland from the Murray River. The consultation revealed that the general view of farmers was that onshore natural gas development would be considered positively if there was no impact on the water source, which was seen to be unlikely.

However, where the quantity or quality of ground water is seen to be at risk in any way because of potential onshore gas operations, the attitude to the development was entirely different and adversarial. The critical dependency of these farmers and the community on ground water supply and quality was seen as not worth risking, and absolutely solid assurances regarding the protection of the water source would be needed before any serious consideration of onshore natural gas development would be supported.

An example of this situation is Murrayville which draws town and farming water from a saucer shaped 'reservoir' of good quality water underground. The community has stated that this water is surrounded by very saline 'black' water which is prevented from contaminating it by naturally occurring hydraulic pressure.

This water source is expected to last 300 years and the town and surrounding farms are entirely dependent on it. Consequently, there is an attitude of zero risk to any activity that might threaten this vital fresh water source, and deep concerns that the drilling associated with onshore natural gas exploration would threaten the town's existence.

In other respects these communities are very similar. Both communities raised concerns about the biosecurity risks associated with vehicle traffic from region to region and the complexity of managing this risk with mining and other companies.

Amenity was less of an issue in this region as it was less closely settled and farmers felt that infrastructure associated with onshore natural gas could probably be accommodated to allow normal farming operations.

Extensive grazing (South Western Victoria)

The attitudes of communities in South Western Victoria to onshore natural gas development were significantly influenced by many farmers' experiences with the now failed blue gum industry expansion in the region.

The negative impacts from blue gum development were seen to have affected agriculture, tourism, and local infrastructure (especially roads), and to have significantly changed the character of the community locally. The impact of blue gum development on neighbouring farming properties was not managed nor compensated well, and divisions developed between those involved in blue gums and the general farming community.

With the collapse of the blue gum companies a major restoration is underway. Many people expressed fears that a potential onshore gas development may create similar issues.

Responses were not entirely uniform but the predominant position was one of reticence. The concerns raised included potential impacts on water courses, impacts on land prices, negative impacts on food and agriculture and its 'clean/green' image, regulators failing to control industry development, scepticism that the benefits would flow to the community, external impacts on neighbours and the wider community, and a general concern the risks were too high relative to the benefits.

There was also a recognition by some farmers that the industry could provide a valuable additional cash flow and regional employment if it could be well managed and well controlled.

Commercial gas users

The situation facing commercial gas users in Victoria is that demand in the eastern states integrated pipeline has grown dramatically in recent years from 700 PJ (petajoules) to 2100 PJ due to the securing of large LNG export contracts by Queensland based companies, which will have to be partly met from the wider pipeline system at least in the shorter term.

Australia generally does not reserve any of its gas for domestic users, except for Western Australia which does reserve gas but at export-based prices.

Commercial gas users have already experienced a more than doubling of the previous long-term price to $9/PJ, and they expect to go higher towards Asian prices (e.g. $16/PJ currently in Japan). At this price domestic industries highly dependent on gas will struggle to be competitive, the effects of which could play out in terms of closures, job losses and less investment quite quickly.

Commercial gas users are finding that renewal of gas supply contracts has become problematic as suppliers have in sight lucrative alternative export markets and concerns about supply. Competition in the domestic market is also reduced and some suppliers are now reluctant to arrange longer-term contracts given the prospects of increasing prices in future.

Gas suppliers now have strong incentives to 'reserve' gas for the export market at the expense of the domestic users. The conditions of new contracts are also becoming onerous in terms of 'take or pay' requirements and the practice of 'joint marketing' by major suppliers is seen as unfair. This range of new behaviours is seen as an inappropriate level of supplier power which is not being effectively managed by the relevant authorities.

A policy change is urgently sought to allow the orderly and managed marketing of gas to the export and domestic markets, to increase competition and transparency in the gas supply market and/or reduce excessive supplier market power.

Some seek interventions that achieve domestic gas prices closer to the traditional long-term trend level. Others seek a managed, effective and more transparent gas market similar to that for electricity.

Commercial gas users are concerned that the impacts of higher gas prices on industry competitiveness and domestic users will be felt far more rapidly than any impact of the development of an onshore natural gas industry in Victoria. Some companies are foreshadowing a return to coal as a cheaper and more predictable energy source.

Victoria's largest single user of gas is Australian Paper, which employs some 1300 people directly. The company has stated categorically that an increase of the gas price of the scale anticipated will render the business uncompetitive as it has no viable alternative sources of energy.

Household gas users

Organisations representing household users of gas see current energy prices (electricity and gas) as a major community concern, and they are predicting further substantial increases in gas prices possibly in the order of two to three times current levels. This level of price increase will have significant social consequences, especially for those at the lower income levels.

The influence of the development of an onshore natural gas industry in Victoria is regarded a 'nearly irrelevant' in terms of its influence on future gas prices, in view of the export orientation of the gas market.

These organisations saw the structure of gas market as not providing the same level of transparency as the electricity market, with the potential for greater capacity to manipulate the market. The structure of the European gas market was seen as superior and providing a model Australia could follow.

There was also seen to be conflict between the government policies for resources, agriculture and energy for industry and for households which is creating tensions between competing objectives. In particular, Victoria was seen to have greater potential for conflict between competing uses of land, such as agriculture and onshore natural gas, since agriculture is more intensive and closely settled in Victoria compared to the areas of Queensland and New South Wales where onshore natural gas development has occurred.

Some measures to smooth or cushion the transition to higher gas prices were suggested, including reservation of gas for domestic use at a price lower than the export price, using resource rents to offset the market price, storing gas (e.g. underground) to manage seasonal price peaks, and regulating the rate at which gas prices can increase for the domestic market.

Regardless of what, if any, amelioration measures are taken there is little doubt that household use of natural gas will undergo a major change as the price rises.

Related government agencies

Most local government agencies representing areas prospective for onshore natural gas have taken a cautious or negative stance with respect to the possibility of the development of an onshore natural gas industry. Their concerns centre around any potential for contamination of the natural resource base, as well as impacts on the amenity of the landscape, community character and collateral impacts on other industries or community activity.

Those agencies in the higher rainfall zones made particular reference to concerns about the potential for negative impacts on agricultural productivity.

Councils in areas where mining or offshore gas development has significant presence were more open to the prospect of development of onshore natural gas, highlighting the possibility that both the local economy and local employment opportunities might be enhanced.

A number of councils expressed concerns that their level of influence in this matter appears to be small, yet their accountability to their communities is high. Most concede limited detailed knowledge about onshore natural gas.

They were quite anxious about the extent of their role, or otherwise, in any process of decision making about onshore natural gas development in the face of significant constituent activism. A number commented that this community consultation was a very positive process overall.

The water authorities interviewed highlighted that, as government agencies, their role was to implement government policy and programs. However, they did emphasise that the water industry is a major energy user, water quality is crucial and that water supply is paramount for the community.

They acknowledged that any water authority would have concerns about the potential for ‘depressurisation’ of vital aquifers and the above ground integrity of waste water storages. There was concern about there being no requirement for onshore natural gas development applications to be referred to water authorities given their expertise in water and accountabilities. The need for adequate regulatory processes to ensure water system integrity was emphasised.

Landcare Council of Victoria emphasised the importance of credible, scientific information to inform both the decisions of government in respect to onshore natural gas and its own subsequent decision-making.

The effective regulation of onshore natural gas development

Many people participating in the community consultations and the quantitative surveys raised concerns about the effectiveness of regulation of onshore natural gas development.

Professor Samantha Hepburn, Deakin University[2], has provided advice to the effect that Victoria is in the enviable position of being able to draw from national and international best practice in designing a regulatory model for an onshore natural gas industry. The current regulatory instruments (e.g. Petroleum Act 1998 and the Mineral Resources Sustainable Development Act 1990) are seen as not well tailored for the task of regulating a potential onshore natural gas industry; nor do they meet community expectations.

Professor Hepburn suggested an example of what might be undertaken in Queensland, where a mandatory code of conduct and compensation has been introduced which ensures onshore natural gas exploration or development proceeds only with landholder agreement, so diffusing much of the angst associated with the process of gaining access to landholders properties.

Suggestions were offered for a range of features that Victoria should consider in a regulatory framework, including:

- a mandatory code of conduct and compensation, including provision for legal costs for landholders;
- public disclosure of revenue (or revenue range) offered to landholders to help balance negotiating powers;
- an holistic impact analysis by independent scientific authorities;
- protective frameworks for potential environmental, health and community impacts;
- codes of practice and standards for critical processes (e.g. drilling and fracking);
- bans on toxic chemicals and disclosure of those chemicals currently used in fracking;
- proportionate bonds and sanctions to support adequate remediation;
- redistribution of part of the royalties earned to the regions and communities providing onshore natural gas;
- removal of executive powers to waive regulatory requirements;
- simplification and clarification of the current regulatory system;
- integration of national and state regulatory processes for onshore natural gas to improve efficiency.

[2] Professor Hepburn is Professor of Law at Deakin University. She has a strong research interest and expertise in unconventional gas regulation in Australia, and was a presenter at the International Natural Gas and Fracking Conference: Sydney 2014.

Community views on the development of onshore natural gas

Part B – Overview of quantitative study of community attitudes

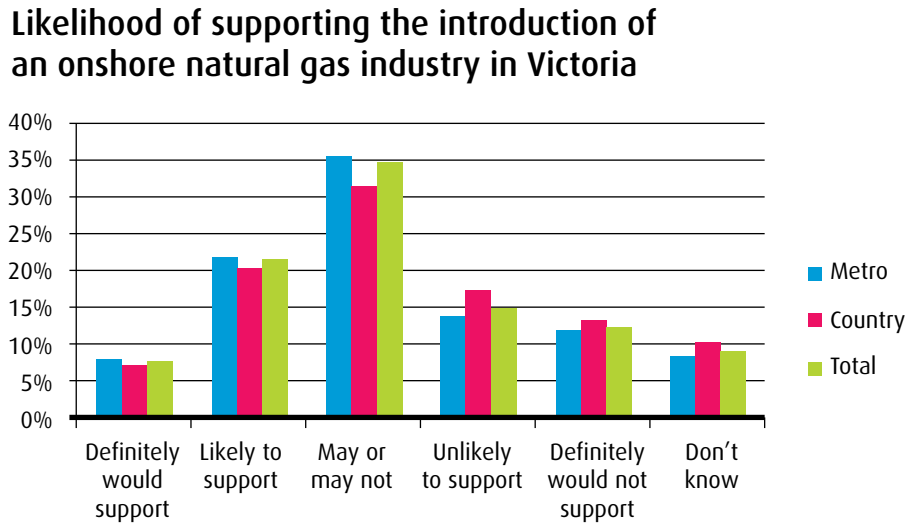
A survey of the attitudes of 960 Victorians was conducted in September 2014. The core objective of the research was to quantify the current opinions of the Victorian public about onshore natural gas and the potential introduction of an onshore natural gas industry. The sample consisted of 400 from metropolitan Melbourne and the rest from the rest of Victoria. The main sample involved an online survey with additional interviewing conducted by telephone to provide a boost sample of 250 in the areas defined by the current geological survey maps as areas that might be most likely to be directly affected by any future onshore natural gas industry (known as the Western Victorian area and the Eastern Victorian area). The full quantitative report can be seen in Appendix 3.

The main objectives of surveying the Victorian community were to identify:

- the overall level of support for a potential onshore natural gas industry;
- community views on the net benefits of a potential industry, on the impacts and opportunities of a potential industry, on industry consultation, and on regulation and control of the industry;
- any differences in attitudes between metropolitan and rural communities;
- the community perspectives in potentially directly impacted areas.

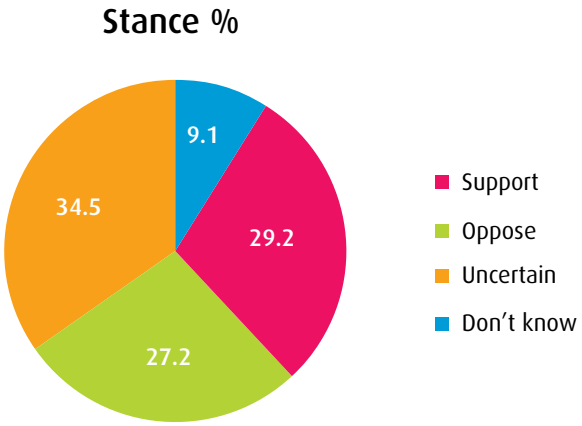
1. Current attitudes to a potential onshore gas industry

Interviewees were asked the key question: *"Considering what you currently know about the onshore natural gas Industry how likely would you be to support the introduction of the industry in Victoria if it turned out to be feasible in the future."* The results are shown in the chart below.



Firstly, it is immediately apparent from the chart that the difference between the attitudes of metropolitan and country people in general are quite small and not a significant consideration.

Secondly, the community can be considered as having a 'stance' which is polarised into three sizable groups that support, or do not support, or are undecided/don't know at this point. In numerical terms the overall support level (definitely/likely) for an onshore natural gas industry in Victoria was 29%, the overall opposition level (definitely/likely) was 27%, while the overall undecided/don't know component was 44%[3].
This overall stance is significant because it is reflected to a greater or lesser degree in the response patterns to most questions.



Some insight into why this situation prevails can be gained from the reasons given by interviewees for their attitudes above. Respondents were asked about the reasons for their stance on the onshore natural gas industry "What are your main reasons for that attitude towards the onshore natural gas industry?", and the detailed reasons – or lack of reasons for the 'uncertain' and 'don't knows' – are summarised below.

Main reasons for support/not support onshore natural gas	
Unsure of environmental impacts	29.4%
Need more information	28.0%
Good for our future/economy	14.9%
Cheaper energy	8.3%
Fracking process is detrimental	7.3%
Possible side effects on groundwater	7.0%
Effects people's lives adversely (e.g. health/property)	5.7%
Cleaner energy	5.5%
Support it/general positive feelings	5.1%
General negative feelings	4.7%
Creates employment	4.1%
None/nothing/no comment	3.8%
Don't know	3.7%
Renewable energy sources are better	3.2%
All about money/profit	3.1%
Not sustainable	1.9%
Other	1.5%
No cheap exporting	1.4%
Don't trust governments honesty	1.1%

[3] The quantitative report sets out its approach to ensuring unbiased and robust findings. Figures are rounded.

2. Community views on the net benefits of a potential industry

Interviewees were questioned in a variety of ways about their perception of the net benefits of an onshore natural gas industry, and the results are given below.

Net benefits	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Total
On balance, the benefits far outweigh the costs	2%	16%	23%	13%	12%	34%	100%
The potential benefits of onshore natural gas outweigh the potential costs and risks.	2%	15%	23%	13%	13%	34%	100%
The potential benefits of onshore natural gas far outweigh the potential costs and risks.	2%	12%	25%	13%	13%	35%	100%
I believe that the benefits of an onshore natural gas industry clearly outweighs its risks	3%	14%	27%	15%	12%	29%	100%
The fact that the onshore natural gas industry is well established in other places makes me confident about its overall value to the community	2%	20%	26%	17%	13%	22%	100%
Onshore natural gas would only provide short term benefits but disadvantages could be long term	14%	19%	21%	10%	2%	35%	100%

Respondents were consistent across this issue with around one third (33%) stating they 'did not know' whether the benefits of an onshore natural gas industry outweighed the costs, with around 17% saying it does and around 25% disagreeing this is the case. The remaining 25% of the population took the middle position. When the issue was framed in terms of short term benefits versus long term disadvantages the attitudes were slightly more negative with a total of 33% agreeing that this was the case.

Respondents were also asked their perceptions about jobs and export opportunities for Victoria arising from a potential onshore natural gas industry, and the results are given below.

The Victoria wide opportunity	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Total
The onshore natural gas industry could represent a large opportunity for the Victorian economy in terms of investment and jobs.	6%	38%	25%	6%	4%	21%	100%
Export opportunities for Victorian natural gas would generate investment and jobs for the State.	7%	38%	20%	7%	5%	24%	100%

There was a very positive assessment about the potential for jobs growth, with the alternative views largely in the undecided/don't know category.

3. Community views on the impacts of a potential onshore natural gas industry

Respondents were asked about the impact of an onshore natural gas industry on local industries and the results are given below.

Industry impacts	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Total
Tourism in parts of country Victoria would be negatively affected by onshore natural gas activities.	11%	25%	23%	9%	1%	32%	100%
The impact on agriculture in Victoria would be negative.	12%	18%	24%	9%	3%	35%	100%
Farmers and other landowners could get better returns if there was an onshore natural gas industry in their area.	2%	16%	23%	11%	8%	40%	100%

The undecided/don't know responses were dominant in this area, but a negative perception was indicated for tourism and agriculture.

The local community impacts were looked at separately and the responses are given below.

Local community impacts including visual amenity	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Total
An onshore natural gas industry would not lower land values in the local area it operated in.	2%	10%	23%	22%	13%	30%	100%
An onshore natural gas industry would have a positive impact for people living in the area where operations were.	3%	17%	29%	11%	10%	30%	100%
Onshore natural gas activities would be divisive or disruptive in the local communities where they might be located.	12%	25%	23%	7%	1%	32%	100%
The onshore natural gas industry would damage the views/ visual amenity in the Victorian countryside.	14%	24%	24%	8%	1%	29%	100%
Local employment in areas of onshore natural gas operation would increase.	5%	41%	24%	5%	3%	22%	100%
An onshore natural gas industry would not be visually ugly in the country landscape.	3%	12%	24%	19%	11%	32%	100%

Overall the undecided/don't know category was the dominant response but strong concerns were indicated in relation to industry disruption and visual amenity.

4. Community views on the need for consultation

Respondents were asked about the need for consultation in the future and the results are given below.

Need for community consultation in future	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Total
The local community would need to be extensively consulted before any onshore natural gas activity occurred in an area.	42%	28%	13%	2%	1%	14%	100%
Farmers and other landowners should be able to refuse access to onshore natural gas activity on their land.	29%	27%	17%	6%	2%	19%	100%
I do not believe that most of the Victorian community is well enough informed about the onshore natural gas industry.	27%	34%	18%	5%	1%	14%	100%

There was a strong indication given that there is a need for local community consultation in the future and the need for further information to be provided. The majority of respondents felt this way. There was also definite support by the majority for farmers to have the right to refuse access to onshore natural gas activity on their land[4].

[4] The survey did not identify that minerals are owned by the State on behalf of the community and that compensation is payable to landowners for access. It is unknown how respondents might have answered if they knew there was a cost to the wider community. This aspect would need to be tested through further survey, subsequent to this project.

5. Community views on regulation and control

Respondents were asked about regulation and control and the results are set out below.

Regulation and control	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Total
No amount of government rules and regulation can make an onshore natural gas industry satisfactory.	13%	16%	25%	15%	3%	28%	100%
The government would need to control companies involved in onshore natural gas activity strictly.	34%	36%	13%	2%	0%	15%	100%
Effective government regulation of an onshore natural gas industry should be straightforward.	14%	34%	20%	8%	5%	20%	100%
Government can make sure there are sufficient regulations to create a sound onshore natural gas industry in Victoria.	10%	34%	20%	11%	7%	19%	100%

There is strong support for government control of onshore natural gas activity (70% agree) and a reasonable level of confidence that they (government) can make sure there are sufficient regulations (44% agree) to achieve this. However, there was also significant support for the view that no amount of government regulation can make the industry satisfactory (29%).

6. Community views on the environment and related issues

Respondents were asked their views about the environment and related issues and the results are set out below.

Personal attitudes to the environment and related aspects	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Total
I am totally opposed to any onshore natural gas activity in Victoria.	11%	13%	32%	21%	7%	17%	100%
I would support the development of an onshore natural gas industry in Victoria.	3%	21%	29%	10%	13%	24%	100%
I would actively oppose an onshore natural gas industry in Victoria.	9%	12%	31%	22%	7%	19%	100%
I am uncertain about whether we should have an onshore natural gas industry in Victoria.	10%	30%	24%	16%	7%	13%	100%
I am committed to environmental causes.	17%	32%	36%	7%	2%	5%	100%
I believe that urgent action is needed on climate change in Australia.	28%	30%	24%	8%	4%	6%	100%
Global warming is a major and urgent problem for the world.	31%	30%	22%	7%	5%	6%	100%
I believe having renewable sources of energy is of vital importance.	38%	40%	14%	2%	1%	6%	100%

The general community viewpoint is split on the industry itself and, as previously, we have a quarter supportive, a quarter unsupportive and the remainder uncertain or not knowing. The strength of feeling by some opponents is indicated by some 21% agreeing that they would actively oppose the industry in Victoria. The level of support in the areas of environmental causes, climate change, global warming and renewable energy was strong. These views underline the extent to which the Victorian community feel strongly about energy and environment issues, which is a factor in the large proportion uncertain about having an onshore natural gas industry.

7. The differences between metropolitan Melbourne and rural Victorian views

There were slight differences between the responses to most issues in rural areas compared to those from metropolitan Melbourne. The main differences of note one in rural areas are the lower levels of trust in science and scientists to manage risks, and in government to ensure adequate compensation to farmers for disruption to farming operations. There was also little difference between the undecided (neither agree nor disagree) and the proportion of 'don't knows' between Melbourne and the rest of the state. On most issues typically around one quarter are 'uncertain' and another quarter 'don't know'. In view of this situation, and the extensive presentation of the results in the quantitative report, a descriptive summary only of the results is presented here.

Melbourne respondents are somewhat more positive about the potential of an onshore gas industry, its possible benefits in terms of 'keeping natural gas prices down', and in seeing natural gas as 'being better for the environment'. They are also slightly more likely to see a need to act quickly to take advantage of any potential opportunity, and they have a more positive assessment of the benefits in jobs and export opportunities from the Victoria-wide perspective. Despite these views, capital city respondents do not see the net benefit picture that differently. Both capital city and rural respondents have very similar views on the benefits versus costs equation.

The rural community sample was more sceptical about the value of scientists in monitoring risks and the extent to which scientists can be trusted (14% and 10% differences respectively). These were marked differences in view compared to the metropolitan sample. In a similar vein, Melbourne respondents are both more definite that government has to strictly control the industry, and have a stronger belief that it can. For example 45% agree that government can make sure there are sufficient regulations to make the industry sound compared to 39% of rural respondents.

8. Community attitudes in the potentially affected west and east geographic areas

Community attitudes in the areas more prospective for gas were examined more specifically and compared to the responses from metropolitan Melbourne. The results are shown below.

	MAIN SAMPLE			AREA SAMPLE		
	Metro	Non metro/ rural	Total main sample	Western Victorian gas area	Eastern Victorian gas area	Total potential gas area sample
Definitely would support	8%	7%	8%	4%	6%	5%
Likely to support	22%	20%	22%	15%	6%	9%
May or may not	35%	32%	35%	34%	29%	31%
Unlikely to support	15%	17%	15%	16%	27%	23%
Definitely would not support	12%	13%	12%	25%	22%	23%
Don't know	9%	10%	9%	6%	11%	9%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

In the potentially affected gas areas opposition to an onshore gas industry is much stronger. If opposition is measured as the 'unlikely to support/definitely would not support' categories then 46% of the gas areas' sample are opposed to the industry as against 27% of the metropolitan sample. Similarly, support for the industry (definitely would support/likely to support) in the affected areas is low at 14% as against the metropolitan figure of 30%.

The detailed survey results from the quantitative report reveal some of the underlying reasons for these attitudinal differences:

- 37% of the potentially affected areas' sample as against 25% of the metropolitan sample disagreed that the potential benefits far outweigh the costs
- 47% agree that benefits would be short-term and disadvantages long-term compared to 32% agreeing in the metro area
- 18% agree that an onshore natural gas industry would help keep prices down in Victoria compared to 28% in the metro area
- the perceived risk to water supplies is a particular concern for Eastern and Western area people with 50% agreeing the risks to underground water supplies from onshore natural gas are unacceptably high compared to 34% in the metro area
- people in Eastern and Western Victoria are more sceptical of the likelihood of a science program to understand and monitor the possible impacts of a potential onshore natural gas industry on water supplies to ensure that there was no damage, with only 22% agreeing with this compared to 37% of metro respondents
- at the local level they believe they are less likely to see increased employment benefits (37% agree compared to 48% in the metro area)
- in the area of personal attitudes, those living in the Eastern and Western areas have almost identical attitudes to climate change and the environment in general to those in Melbourne.

These results provide insights into the reasons why regional people in the potentially affected areas are more opposed to an onshore natural gas industry than their metropolitan counterparts.

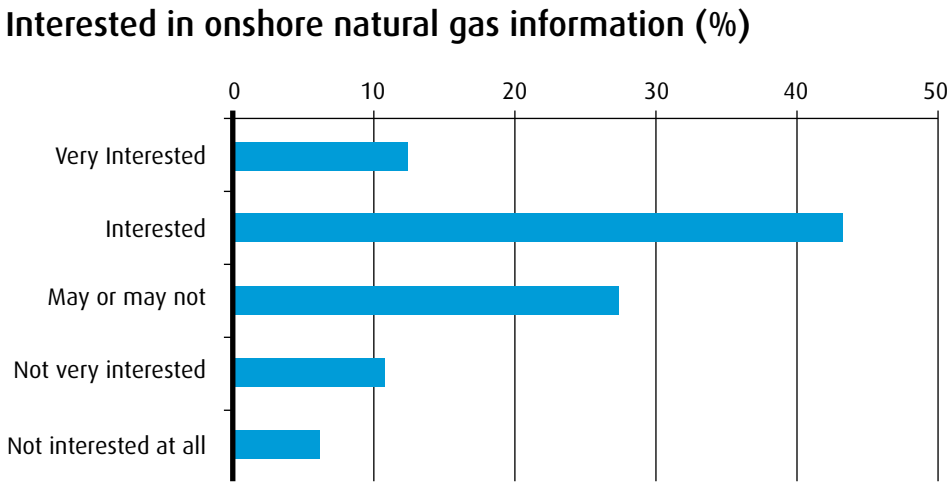
There was a noticeable difference between the Western Victorian gas area and the Eastern Victoria gas area in support for the industry. For almost all of the attitudinal criteria examined the responses from the western gas area were more positive towards industry development than those from the eastern gas area, and the undecided proportion of the population was lower. Overall, the west is more positive about the industry and its potential benefits, but they are more concerned about water contamination issues, possibly because of the greater concern about water supply generally in the west of the State.

9. The level of awareness about onshore natural gas

In terms of their knowledge of onshore natural gas, including coal seam gas, the level of knowledge indicated was limited. Some 43% indicated they knew not much at all, including nothing at all, with 41% saying they knew a little and 17% considered they knew a lot or a fair bit.

	Region		Total
Knowledge level – onshore natural gas	Metro	Non metro/rural	
A lot	3%	2%	3%
A fair bit	14%	15%	14%
A little	41%	39%	41%
Not much at all	42%	45%	43%
Total	100%	100%	100%

The current sources of information on onshore natural gas are usually television, newspapers, internet, radio and friends. It was significant that a large proportion (55%) of those surveyed expressed interest in learning more about onshore natural gas as shown in the chart below.



The strong desire for more information revealed here appears to present one way forward in resolving some of the policy issues about onshore natural gas in Victoria.

Appendices

Appendix 1.
Schedule of Open Days

Community Open Days: 16

Gippsland		
1.	Warragul	05/06/14
2.	Sale	10/06/14
3.	Bairnsdale	11/06/14
4.	Yarram	12/06/14
5.	Inverloch	17/06/14
6.	Mirboo North	18/06/14
7.	Traralgon	24/07/14

South West Victoria		
1.	Torquay	19/06/14
2.	Casterton	24/06/14
3.	Terang	25/06/14
4.	Colac	26/06/14
5.	Heywood	05/08/14

Northern Victoria		
1.	Cullulleraine	22/06/14
2.	Murrayville	23/07/14
3.	Wangaratta	29/07/14
4.	Numurkah	30/07/14

Appendix 2.
Schedule of Stakeholder Discussions

Community and stakeholder discussions

Pre-Open Day Discussions: 16

1.	Warragul	05/06/14
2.	Sale	10/06/14
3.	Bairnsdale	11/06/14
4.	Yarram	12/06/14
5.	Inverloch	17/06/14
6.	Mirboo North	18/06/14
7.	Torquay	19/06/14
8.	Portland	24/06/14
9.	Casterton	24/06/14
10.	Terang	25/06/14
11.	Colac	26/06/14
12.	Cullulleraine	22/07/14
13.	Murrayville	23/07/14
14.	Wangaratta	29/07/14
15.	Numurkah	30/07/14
16.	Portland /Heywood	05/08/14

Individual Stakeholder Meetings: 21

1.	Friends of the Earth/Lock the Gate	22/05/14
2.	Victorian Farmers Federation	22/05/14
3.	Lakes Oil NL	28/05/14
4.	Ignite Energy Resources/ExxonMobil Australia	28/05/14
5.	Doctors for the Environment	12/06/14
6.	Australian Petroleum Production & Exploration Association (APPEA)	30/06/14
7.	Australian Paper	04/08/14
8.	Victorian Landcare Council	12/08/14
9.	Committee for Gippsland	13/08/14
10.	United Dairyfarmers of Victoria	18/08/14
11.	Business Council of Australia	18/08/14
12.	The Australia Institute	19/08/14
13.	World Council of Chemical Engineers	20/08/14
14.	Prof Samantha Hepburn, Deakin University	26/08/14
15.	Gunaikurnai*	29/08/14
16.	Minerals Council of Victoria	03/09/14
17.	Consumer Utilities Advocacy Centre/St Vincent de Paul	10/09/14
18.	Otway Business Inc*	17/09/14
19.	Beach Energy	22/09/14
20.	Business Group (Horsham)	24/09/14
21.	Origin Energy	12/03/15

*telephone conversations

Group Stakeholder Meetings: 19

1.	Clean Coal Advisory Committee	13/08/14
2.	Australian Victorian Industry Group	26/08/14
3.	Municipal Association of Victoria	04/09/14
4.	Australian Dairy Industry	10/09/14
5.	Victorian Water Authorities	25/09/14
6.	Catchment Management Authority	26/09/14
Farmer Meetings		
7.	Grains West (Nhill)	23/09/14
8.	Grains West (Murtoa)	24/09/14
9.	Grains North West (Mildura)	28/10/14
10.	Dairy Central Gippsland (Maffra)	04/08/14
11.	Dairy South Gippsland (Korumburra)	15/10/14
12.	Dairy South West (Camperdown)	08/10/14
13.	Dairy North Central (Numurkah)	21/10/14
14.	Red Meat West (Hamilton)	23/09/14
Community Meetings		
15.	Gippsland (Sale)	16/09/14
16.	South Gippsland (Leongatha)	16/09/14
17.	South West (Portland)	17/09/14
18.	South West (Colac)	17/09/14
19.	Murrayville	29/10/14

Individual Stakeholder Meetings: 21

1.	Gippsland	07/10/14
2.	South West Victoria	08/10/14
3.	Gippsland	25/02/15
4.	South West Victoria	26/02/15
5.	Gippsland	10/03/15
6.	South West Victoria	11/03/15
7.	Gippsland	24/03/15
8.	South West Victoria	25/03/15

Local Government Pre-Open Day Meetings: 12

1.	Baw Baw Shire	05/06/14
2.	Wellington Shire	10/06/14
3.	East Gippsland Shire	11/06/14
4.	South Gippsland Shire	12/06/14
5.	Surf Coast Shire	19/06/14
6.	Glenelg Shire	24/06/14
7.	Corangamite Shire	25/06/14
8.	Colac Otway Shire	26/06/14
9.	Mildura Shire	23/07/14
10.	Wangaratta Shire	29/07/14
11.	Moira Shire	30/07/14
12.	Portland (Heywood)	05/08/14

Appendix 3.
Full quantitative study

This report is presented in its entirety as submitted to the Independent Facilitator.

3.1 Survey Questionnaire

3.2 Map for potential East and West areas used in sampling

3.3 Information Statement

3.4 Comments about what they have heard about onshore natural gas

3.5 Main reasons for attitudes towards onshore natural gas

3.6 Suggestions for the government

Introduction

A survey of the attitudes of around 1000 Victorians was conducted in September 2014. The core objective of the research was:

To quantify the findings of the engagement studies in terms of the current opinions of the Victorian public at large about onshore natural gas and the potential introduction of an onshore natural gas industry.

The more specific objectives of surveying the Victorian community were to identify:

1. The level of awareness of the nature of the onshore natural gas industry and depth of knowledge about it.
2. The sources of information currently used to form opinions about onshore natural gas.
3. The intensity of feeling and current attitudes to a potential onshore natural gas industry.
4. Perceptions of advantages and disadvantages associated with an onshore natural gas industry in Victoria.

In the case of communities in potentially impacted areas there was also have the specific need to understand the issues from their local perspective.

2.0 The survey methodology and sampling

The main survey consisted of a random sample of 960 Victorians 18 and over; 400 from the Melbourne area and 560 from the rest of Victoria mainly using an online survey approach (refer survey questionnaire Appendix 3.1).

A stratified sampling approach was used with the non-capital city area which was 'oversampled' to ensure that attitudes in the rural areas were well represented.

In combination with the main online survey, additional interviewing was conducted by telephone to provide a sample of 250 in the areas defined by the current geological survey maps as areas that might be most likely to be directly affected by any future ONG industry. The survey results for this part of the sample provided equal numbers from the West and the East of the State (refer Appendix 3.2). All the surveying was conducted professionally by the accredited field company Market Metrics.

To ensure the survey results were exactly representative of the age, gender and location of the respondents the survey data was post-weighted using ABS Census data. This is a standard procedure to remove biases due to random variation and stratified sample design. The weighted results mean that the overall weight given to Melbourne is around 75% with 25% in the rest of Victoria in line with the population. However there are sufficient rural numbers to be able to drill down into their attitudes.

In reporting, the results for the overall Victorian community are separated from the East West area survey results to avoid confusion and highlight regional differences where they exist.

3.0 The survey design approach

It was recognised in the survey design that a large proportion of respondents may have very limited knowledge of onshore natural gas and associated issues. The questioning approach allowed for this variation and, after gauging their initial reactions and knowledge, provided the respondents with a basic outline of the different types of onshore natural gas activity and context for the more specific unconventional gas and fracking aspects.

The question style was a series of statements that the respondent could agree or disagree with and to ensure they were balanced and not leading in nature they were expressed in a mixture positive and negative terms. This approach ensured objectivity and balance in the survey responses.

The references to a 'potential' or 'possible' onshore natural gas 'industry' in the survey were needed to provide a context for respondents to provide their opinion and feedback. The survey avoided language about 'mining' and 'drilling' to a large extent so that the focus is on the larger onshore natural gas picture.

The survey included some redundancy as a quality check, as well as allowing respondents to restate their attitudes to the potential industry as the survey progressed. The survey is provided in Appendix 3.1.

4.0 The big picture results – overall attitudes to onshore natural gas

In the initial stage of the survey (Section 2) respondents were asked simply: "*Have you heard anything about onshore natural gas in Australia or other parts of the world?"*

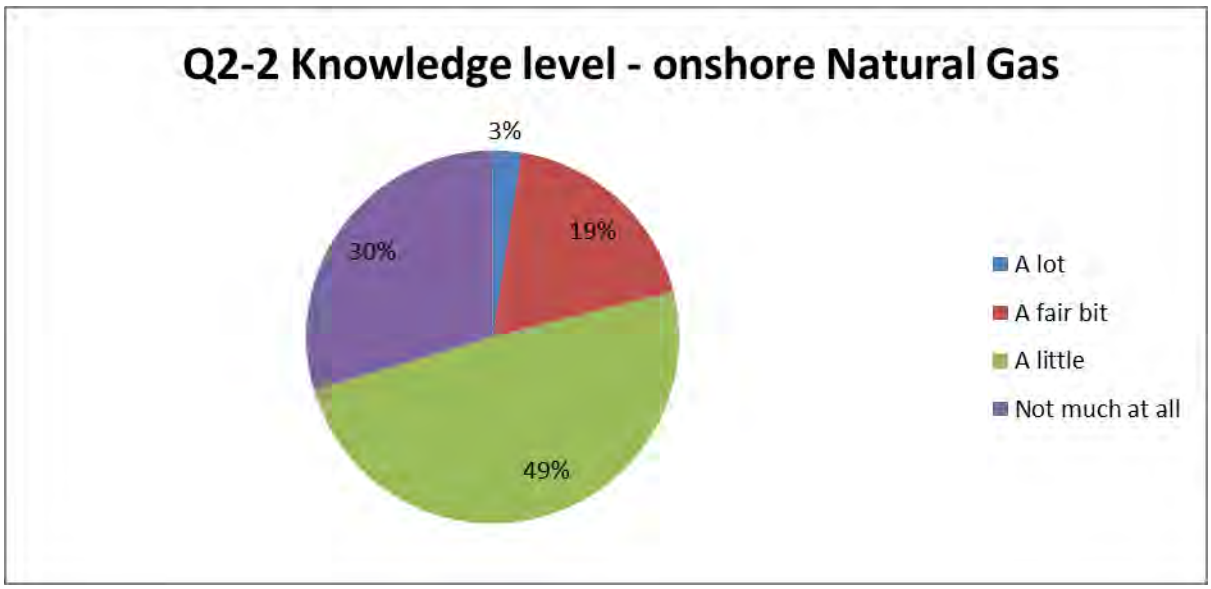
Their response is shown in the table below and indicates that overall around one third had, with a higher proportion (approaching around half) of these from outside Melbourne.

In the reporting, the term 'Melbourne' will be used to cover the capital city respondents and 'rural' to cover the rest of Victoria.

Q2-1 *Heard anything about onshore natural gas?*			
	Region		**Total**
	Metro	**Rural**	
Yes	35.1%	45.5%	37.7%
No	64.9%	54.5%	62.3%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

They were then asked: "*How much do you feel you know about onshore natural gas?"*

Only a very small number (2.5%) felt that they knew a lot but a more sizeable 18.6% rated their knowledge as "a fair bit".



	Region		Total
Q2-2 *Knowledge level – onshore natural gas?*	**Metro**	**Rural**	
A lot	2.4%	2.8%	2.5%
A fair bit	18.3%	19.3%	18.6%
A little	50.4%	46.8%	49.3%
Not much at all	29.0%	31.2%	29.6%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

These questions were repeated for Coal Seam Gas. The wording was: *"Have you heard anything about Coal Seam Gas, which is a type of onshore natural gas, in Australia or other parts of the world?"*

The response was slightly higher but the level of knowledge claimed was not significantly more. Overall the results suggest that something approaching half the Victorian population has some awareness of the industry with around 20% considering they have a fair bit of knowledge.

Awareness is some 10% higher outside Melbourne but 'knowledge' is rated the same as in Melbourne.

	Region		Total
Q2-3 *Heard anything - Coal Seam Gas?*	**Metro**	**Rural**	
Yes	49.2%	62.0%	52.4%
No	50.8%	38.0%	47.6%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Q2-4 *Knowledge level - Coal Seam Gas?*	Region		Total
	Metro	**Rural**	
A lot	4.0%	4.0%	4.0%
A fair bit	18.1%	18.7%	18.3%
A little	46.5%	42.0%	45.1%
Not much at all	31.4%	35.3%	32.6%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

At this point respondents were asked if they had any comments *("Do you have any comments from what you know or have heard about onshore natural gas?").* The response was strong with around one third of the sample showing some degree of confidence in expressing some knowledge and often this was a strong opinion. These generally negative responses are provided in Appendix 3.4.

The summary categories of the 502 responses made are shown below.

Comments - None/Nothing/No comment	26.1%
Comments - Concerned about Environmental impacts	15.6%
Comments - I don't know enough about it	14.4%
Comments - Concerns about water source contamination	10.0%
Comments - General negative feelings	6.8%
Comments - Heard about protests/Controversial	6.5%
Comments - Totally against it	5.6%
Comments - Something to do with Fracking	5.2%
Comments - Destroys farming land	4.9%
Comments - Need more research into ramifications	4.9%
Comments - Viable way to go/necessary	4.2%
Comments - General positive feelings	3.6%
Comments - Opposed to unreasonable access to private property	3.6%
Comments – Other	3.3%
Comments - Dislike procedure for gas exploration (e.g. damage)	2.8%
Comments - Cleaner/efficient energy	2.6%
Comments - Health concerns	2.6%
Comments - Found in WA	2.0%
Comments - They drill for the gas onshore	2.0%
Comments - Can't distinguish fact from fiction about it	1.8%
Comments - Chemicals are used subterranean	1.7%
Comments - Prefer other power sources funded (e.g. solar)	1.6%
Comments - More controls put in place for protection	1.5%
Comments - Extensive development overseas	1.4%
Comments - Non renewable	1.2%
Comments - Don't know	1.1%
Comments - Export it cheaper than we can get it	0.9%
Comments – Cheaper	0.8%

Base n=502 out of total sample of 960

Respondents were then provided with basic information about onshore natural gas (refer Information Statement – Appendix 3.3) and asked if this prompted them to remember more. Around half indicated it did but the change in their stance was insignificant.

	Region		**Total**
Q2-6 *Information prompted to recall/recall more about Onshore natural gas?*	**Metro**	**Rural**	
Yes	49.9%	44.4%	48.5%
No	50.1%	55.6%	51.5%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

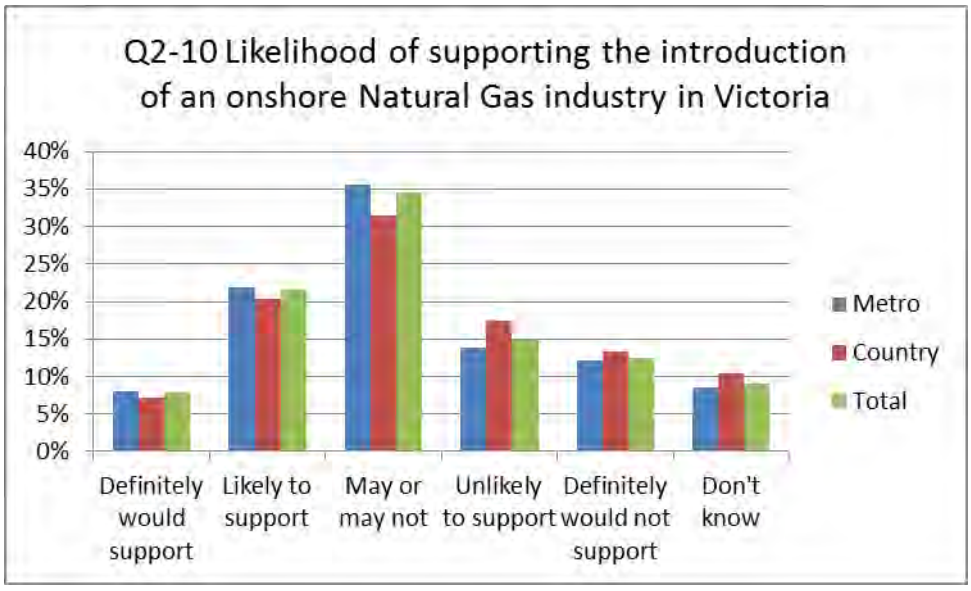
In light of the information provided, respondents were again asked to indicate their level of knowledge. The response suggested that some respondents were somewhat less confident about their knowledge level but around 17% considered that they knew 'a lot' or 'a fair bit'.

	Region		Total
Q2-7 ***Knowledge level - onshore natural gas?***	**Metro**	**Country**	
A lot	2.6%	2.1%	2.5%
A fair bit	13.9%	14.5%	14.1%
A little	41.2%	38.6%	40.6%
Not much at all	42.2%	44.8%	42.9%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

In response to the question: *"Considering what you currently know about the onshore natural gas Industry how likely would you be to support the introduction of the industry in Victoria if it turned out to be feasible in the future."* The support level for an onshore natural gas industry in Victoria was about 30%, opposition 27% with 35% undecided and 9% saying don't know.

It should be noted that the 'definitely would not' support group was 12.4% which was larger than the 7.8% who 'definitely would' support. Another key observation is that there is no real difference between the Melbourne and country populations.

	Region		Total
Q2-10 *Likelihood of supporting the introduction of an onshore natural gas industry in Victoria?*	**Metro**	**Country**	
Definitely would support	8.1%	7.1%	7.8%
Likely to support	21.8%	20.3%	21.5%
May or may not	35.5%	31.5%	34.5%
Unlikely to support	13.9%	17.4%	14.8%
Definitely would not support	12.1%	13.3%	12.4%
Don't know	8.6%	10.4%	9.1%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%



This summary position on the possible industry did not change markedly during the course of the survey as respondent were exposed to the various pros and con arguments in the questions. At the close of the survey respondents were again asked how they felt about the industry and their responses are shown below.

Respondents were asked in the initial section about their reasons for their stance on the onshore natural gas Industry (*Q2-11* "*What are your main reasons for that attitude towards the onshore natural gas industry?"*). The detailed reasons – or lack of reasons for the 'uncertain' and 'don't knows' are summarised below. The verbatim responses are provided in Appendix 3.5.

Main reasons for support/not support onshore natural gas – Q2-11	
Unsure of environmental impacts	29.4%
Need more information	28.0%
Good for our future/economy	14.9%
Cheaper energy	8.3%
Fracking process is detrimental	7.3%
Possible side effects on groundwater	7.0%
Effects people's lives adversely (e.g. health/property)	5.7%
Cleaner energy	5.5%
Support it/general positive feelings	5.1%
General negative feelings	4.7%
Creates employment	4.1%
None/nothing/no comment	3.8%
Don't know	3.7%
Renewable energy sources are better	3.2%
All about money/profit	3.1%
Not sustainable	1.9%
Other	1.5%
No cheap exporting	1.4%
Don't trust governments honesty	1.1%

Base n= 873 of 960 total sample giving reasons.

In broad terms, we can conclude with considerable confidence that around 25% of Victorians are supportive of the industry potential with the same proportion opposing it, and around half undecided and don't knows.

Some 20% of Victorians feel they know a 'fair bit' about the issues with strong opposition in the 'definitely would not support' group at around 13%, or one in 6 Victorians.

The sequence of responses at various survey stages has been elaborated to demonstrate the unbiased nature of the survey approach. It also indicates the robust nature of the findings.

	Region		Total
Q5-2 – *Likelihood of supporting the introduction of an onshore natural gas industry into Victoria?*	**Metro**	**Rural**	
Definitely would support	7.0%	8.0%	7.0%
Likely to support	20.0%	17.0%	19.0%
May or may not	37.0%	34.0%	37.0%
Unlikely to support	11.0%	13.0%	11.0%
Definitely would not support	12.0%	15.0%	13.0%
Don't know /unsure	12.0%	14.0%	13.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

5.0 Overall Victorian community attitudes – specific issues

A range of issues was considered in the research to examine the attitudes and perceptions of the Victorian Community towards onshore natural gas.

To assess the intensity and explore the dimensions of the attitudes expressed different wording and perspectives were sometimes used to cover important aspects. In addition, positive and negatively worded statements were used to ensure a balanced approach.

The 16 specific issues areas examined in this section include the following:

1	Views on net benefit from the potential industry
2	The policy stance and the need to develop
3	Benefit sharing
4	Industry impacts
5	Potential risks – general
6	Potential risks – water
7	Potential risks – health
8	Role of science and technology
9	The Victoria-wide opportunity
10	Local community impacts including visual amenity
11	Farmer and business impacts
12	Need for community consultation in future.
13	Attitude to companies involved
14	Regulation and control
15	Rehabilitation and compensation
16	Personal attitudes to the environment and related aspects

5.1 The total Victorian community

Views on net benefits from the potential industry

Respondents were consistent across this issue with around one third (33%) stating they 'did not know' whether the benefits of an industry outweighed the costs, with around 17% feeling it does and around 25% disagreeing this is the case. The remaining 25% of the population took the middle position.

When the issue was framed in terms of short term benefits versus long term disadvantages the attitudes were slightly more negative with a total of 33% agreeing that this was the case.

Pointing out that the industry was well established elsewhere also did not increase support enough to offset negative views. Although some 22% agreed that it made them more confident, 30% disagreed that it did.

Net benefits	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Total
On balance, the benefits far outweigh the costs	2%	16%	23%	13%	12%	34%	100%
The potential benefits of onshore natural gas outweigh the potential costs and risks.	2%	15%	23%	13%	13%	34%	100%
The potential benefits of onshore natural gas far outweigh the potential costs and risks.	2%	12%	25%	13%	13%	35%	100%
I believe that the benefits of an onshore natural gas industry clearly outweighs its risks	3%	14%	27%	15%	12%	29%	100%
The fact that the onshore natural gas industry is well established in other places makes me confident about its overall value to the community	2%	20%	26%	17%	13%	22%	100%
Onshore natural gas would only provide short term benefits but disadvantages could be long term	14%	19%	21%	10%	2%	35%	100%

The policy stance and the need to develop

The opportunity that onshore natural gas represents and the degree of priority that should be given to it indicated that, while respondents tended to agree more (29% agree versus 15% disagree) that it represented a substantial opportunity and that natural gas was better for the environment than coal (57% agree versus 4 % disagree), support for the industry was split, although respondents were generally more positive about it.

Some 25% considered developing the industry was a low priority, with 18% disagreeing with this position. Some 31% agreed that we need new industries like this in Victoria, while 21% disagreed with this view. Some 26% saw a need for urgency to quickly take account of the demand for natural gas, while 24% disagreed.

Typically, around 25% were uncommitted and around 25% 'did not know' in responses to questions in this and other areas of the survey.

On the extent to which an onshore natural gas industry will keep prices down there was also fairly equal proportions agreeing and disagreeing. Some 25% agreed that it would ensure lower prices for natural gas households, whilst 22% disagreed.

There was very strong endorsement of the view that Victoria needs to move away from coal in Victoria (62% agreed versus 4% agreed). This, however, does not translate into support for an onshore natural gas industry.

When it came to the question about the industry representing progress that a government could not stop, 43% disagreed that this was the case with only 17% seeing this as the situation.

In all the responses it should be noted that the more negative position towards the industry is more strongly held with a higher proportion of respondents disagreeing than the proportion strongly agreeing. For example, some 10% strongly disagreed that we need new industries like onshore natural gas in Victoria while only 5% strongly agreed. This pattern occurs throughout the study.

The policy stance and the need to develop	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Total
I believe that potential opportunity from possible onshore natural gas operations in Victoria is substantial.	4%	25%	29%	8%	7%	27%	100%
Developing an onshore natural gas industry is a low priority in the energy area.	8%	17%	31%	15%	3%	26%	100%
Natural gas is better for the environment than coal.	15%	42%	18%	3%	1%	22%	100%
An onshore natural gas industry in Victoria would ensure lower prices for natural gas for households.	4%	21%	24%	14%	8%	29%	100%
An onshore natural gas industry would help keep gas prices down in Victoria.	5%	22%	22%	16%	7%	28%	100%
We need to urgently move away from coal as an energy source in Victoria towards cleaner energy sources.	26%	36%	22%	3%	1%	12%	100%
We need to act quickly to take advantage of the demand for natural gas.	3%	23%	21%	13%	11%	28%	100%
We need new industries like onshore natural gas in Victoria.	5%	26%	27%	11%	10%	21%	100%
A government cannot stop progress like onshore natural gas development.	2%	12%	23%	26%	17%	20%	100%
The government needs to act to make Victoria attractive to this industry	6%	23%	27%	11%	11%	22%	100%

Benefit sharing

When asked about the extent to which they thought benefits 'would be shared across the community to benefit most people', 25% agreed they would be and 27% disagreed. A larger proportion also thought that the government could not ensure this (43% agreeing versus 13% disagreeing).

Benefit sharing	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Total
The benefits from an onshore natural gas industry would be shared across community to benefit most people.	4%	21%	22%	13%	14%	26%	100%
Government cannot ensure that the economic benefits of an onshore natural gas industry are shared properly amongst the community.	14%	29%	22%	11%	2%	23%	100%

Industry impacts

When asked about the impact of an onshore natural gas industry on tourism, on balance, the response was fairly negative (36% agreed it would be negative and 10% disagreed).

The position on agriculture was seen in a similar way with 30% agreeing the impact would be negative and 12% disagreeing. However the impact on farming returns was less clear with 18% agreeing their returns could be better and 19% disagreeing.

Industry impacts	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Total
Tourism in parts of country Victoria would be negatively affected by onshore natural gas activities.	11%	25%	23%	9%	1%	32%	100%
The impact on agriculture in Victoria would be negative.	12%	18%	24%	9%	3%	35%	100%
Farmers and other landowners could get better returns if there was an onshore natural gas industry in their area.	2%	16%	23%	11%	8%	40%	100%

The Victoria-wide opportunity

When asked about the jobs and export opportunities for Victoria that a potential industry might represent respondents were very positive and more confident that the impact would be positive.

Some 44% agreed that there would be more jobs and investment. Some 45% agreed that there would be export opportunities that generated investment and jobs for the State. Against this view only around 10% disagreed.

The Victoria wide opportunity	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Total
The onshore natural gas industry could represent a large opportunity for the Victorian economy in terms of investment and jobs.	6%	38%	25%	6%	4%	21%	100%
Export opportunities for Victorian natural gas would generate investment and jobs for the State.	7%	38%	20%	7%	5%	24%	100%

Local community impacts including visual amenity

At the regional and local level the possible improvement in employment opportunities were acknowledged (46% agreed local employment would increase against only 8% disagreeing) however, there were a number of other factors where the response was mixed:

- Would not lower land values (12% agreed but 35% disagreed).
- Would have a positive impact on people living in the area (20% agreed, 21% disagreed).
- Would not be divisive or disruptive (37% agreed versus 8% disagreed).
- Local businesses would benefit (41% agreed vs 12% disagreed).
- Farmers would be adequately compensated for any disruption (20% agreed versus 23% disagreed).

On the visual amenity aspect in the local area:

- Would damage views/visual amenity (38% agreed versus 9% disagreed)
- Would not be visually ugly (15% agreed versus 30% disagreed)

Local community impacts including visual amenity	**Strongly agree**	**Agree**	**Neither agree nor disagree**	**Disagree**	**Strongly disagree**	**Don't know**	**Total**
An onshore natural gas industry would not lower land values in the local area it operated in.	2%	10%	23%	22%	13%	30%	100%
An onshore natural gas industry would have a positive impact for people living in the area where operations were.	3%	17%	29%	11%	10%	30%	100%
Onshore natural gas activities would be divisive or disruptive in the local communities where they might be located.	12%	25%	23%	7%	1%	32%	100%
The onshore natural gas industry would damage the views/visual amenity in the Victorian countryside.	14%	24%	24%	8%	1%	29%	100%
Local employment in areas of onshore natural gas operation would increase.	5%	41%	24%	5%	3%	22%	100%
An onshore natural gas industry would not be visually ugly in the country landscape.	3%	12%	24%	19%	11%	32%	100%

Farmer and business impacts

While there is uncertainty about whether or not farmers directly affected would be compensated adequately, there is definite agreement that the industry would be good for local businesses in the area.

Farmer and business impacts	**Strongly agree**	**Agree**	**Neither agree nor disagree**	**Disagree**	**Strongly disagree**	**Don't know**	**Total**
Farmers and other landowners would be adequately compensated for any onshore natural gas disruption to their farming and other	3%	17%	21%	13%	10%	37%	100%

operations.							
Local businesses in areas of onshore natural gas operations would benefit.	5%	36%	23%	9%	3%	25%	100%

The need for consultation in the future

There was a very strong indication given that there is a need for local community consultation in the future and the need for further information to be provided. The majority of respondents felt this way.

There was also definite support by the majority for farmers to have the right to refuse access to activity on their land[1].

Need for community consultation in future	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Total
The local community would need to be extensively consulted before any onshore natural gas activity occurred in an area.	42%	28%	13%	2%	1%	14%	100%
Farmers and other landowners should be able to refuse access to onshore natural gas activity on their land.	29%	27%	17%	6%	2%	19%	100%
I do not believe that most of the Victorian community is well enough informed about the onshore natural gas industry.	27%	34%	18%	5%	1%	14%	100%

Attitude to the companies involved

Although a large proportion of the community is uncertain about the nature of the companies that might be involved in the industry, there is a solid proportion seeing them as 'not to be trusted' (32% agree) while a similar number (33%) see them as 'professional and expert in' their operational area.

Attitude to companies involved	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Total
The companies that might be involved in onshore natural gas activities are likely to be professional and expert in their operational area.	5%	28%	25%	11%	10%	21%	100%
Companies that might be in the onshore natural gas business cannot be trusted.	12%	20%	30%	11%	2%	25%	100%

Regulation and control

There is a strong sense that the government needs to strictly control onshore natural gas activity (70% agree) and a reasonable level of confidence that they can make sure there are sufficient regulations (44% agree) to achieve this.

[1] See Footnote 4, page 30

There is a core proportion of sceptics (29% agree) who believe that no amount of government regulation can make the industry satisfactory.

Regulation and control	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Total
No amount of government rules and regulation can make an onshore natural gas industry satisfactory.	13%	16%	25%	15%	3%	28%	100%
The government would need to control companies involved in onshore natural gas activity strictly.	34%	36%	13%	2%	0%	15%	100%
Effective government regulation of an onshore natural gas industry should be straightforward.	14%	34%	20%	8%	5%	20%	100%
Government can make sure there are sufficient regulations to create a sound onshore natural gas industry in Victoria.	10%	34%	20%	11%	7%	19%	100%

Rehabilitation and compensation

As noted above, there is a general belief that farmers will be compensated (53% agree). A slightly different issue is a strong view that the industry would need to restore and rehabilitate the landscape after it had finished operations (69%).

Rehabilitation and Compensation	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Total
An onshore natural gas industry would need to restore and rehabilitate the landscape after it finished operations.	40%	29%	12%	2%	1%	17%	100%
The government can ensure that farmers are compensated for disruption to their farming operations and other impacts.	16%	37%	17%	5%	5%	20%	100%

Personal views of respondents to the environment and related issues

Although respondents were asked about their attitude to the industry during the survey their more direct personal attitudes were also sought.

As noted earlier in the report, the general vote is split on the industry itself. Typically we have a quarter supportive, a quarter opposed and the remainder uncertain or not knowing.

The strength of feeling by some opponents is indicated by some 21% agreeing that they would actively oppose the industry in Victoria.

The background attitudes to climate change and global warming also are worth noting at this point in time. The majority (61%) consider global warming is an urgent problem for the world and urgent action is needed (58%). Some 78% also consider renewable energy sources are vital.

These various beliefs underline the extent to which the Victorian community feel strongly about energy and environment issues and, while a large proportion are uncertain about having an onshore gas industry, any future debate might need to consider these broader views.

Personal attitudes to the environment and related aspects	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Total
I am totally opposed to any onshore natural gas activity in Victoria.	11%	13%	32%	21%	7%	17%	100%
I would support the development of an onshore natural gas industry in Victoria.	3%	21%	29%	10%	13%	24%	100%
I would actively oppose an onshore natural gas industry in Victoria.	9%	12%	31%	22%	7%	19%	100%
I am uncertain about whether we should have an onshore natural gas industry in Victoria.	10%	30%	24%	16%	7%	13%	100%
I am committed to environmental causes.	17%	32%	36%	7%	2%	5%	100%
I believe that urgent action is needed on climate change in Australia.	28%	30%	24%	8%	4%	6%	100%
Global warming is a major and urgent problem for the world.	31%	30%	22%	7%	5%	6%	100%
I believe having renewable sources of energy is of vital importance.	38%	40%	14%	2%	1%	6%	100%

5.2 Capital city versus rural Victoria views

In this section the views of Melbourne versus the rest of Victoria are examined. The rest of Victoria is labelled ‘rural’ although it includes provincial urban centres.

There is very little difference between the undecided (neither agree nor disagree) and the proportion of ‘don’t knows’ between Melbourne and the rest of the state. On most issues typically around one quarter are ‘uncertain’ and another quarter ‘don’t know’.

When we examine the attitudes in terms of levels of agreement and disagreement we see that in most areas the levels between the areas are very similar.

The exceptions are highlighted in the table below and are summarised here.

<u>The policy stance and the need to develop</u>

Melbourne respondents are slightly more positive about the potential industry and its possible benefits in terms of ‘keeping natural gas prices down’ and natural gas ‘being better for the environment’. They are also slightly more likely to see a need to act quickly to take advantage of the opportunity.

They also see more definite benefits from the Victoria-wide perspective with jobs and export opportunities.

Despite these views, capital city respondents do not see the net benefit picture that differently. Both capital city and rural respondents have very similar views on the benefits versus cost equation.

The role of science and technology

The rural sample is more sceptical about the value of scientists in monitoring risks and the extent to which scientists can be trusted. It is a marked difference in view compared to the metropolitan sample.

The role of government

Capital city respondents are both more definite that government has to strictly control the industry – and have a stronger belief that it can. For example 45% agree that government can make sure there are sufficient regulations to make the industry sound compared to 39% of rural respondents.

Personal attitudes

In the area of personal attitudes it appears that Melbourne respondents have slightly more concern about global warming and renewable energy but otherwise their attitudes of both groups are very similar.

Summary of capital city versus rural differences

There are only very slight differences between the responses to most issues in the rural area and compared to that in the city. The key ones may be a higher degree of scepticism about science and government in the rural areas.

	Metro		**Rural**		**Difference Metro minus rural**	
	% total agree	**% total disagree**	**% total agree**	**% total disagree**	**% total agree**	**% total disagreed**
Views on net benefit from a potential industry						
On balance, the benefits far outweigh the costs.	20%	25%	15%	27%	5%	-2%
The potential benefits of onshore natural gas outweigh the potential costs and risks.	18%	26%	15%	26%	2%	0%
The potential benefits of onshore natural gas far outweigh the potential costs and risks.	14%	26%	15%	25%	-1%	0%
I believe that the benefits of an onshore natural gas industry clearly outweigh its risks.	17%	26%	17%	29%	1%	-3%
The fact that the onshore natural gas industry is well established in other places makes me confident about its overall value to the community.	23%	30%	20%	30%	3%	-1%
Onshore natural gas would only provide short term benefits but disadvantages could be long term.	32%	13%	33%	9%	0%	4%
The policy stance and the need to develop						
I believe that potential opportunity from possible onshore natural gas operations in Victoria are substantial.	31%	15%	24%	16%	7%	-2%
Developing an onshore natural gas industry is a low priority in the energy area.	25%	19%	23%	17%	2%	2%
Natural gas is better for the environment than coal.	58%	3%	51%	5%	8%	-1%
An onshore natural gas industry in Victoria would ensure lower prices for natural gas for households.	26%	21%	23%	26%	3%	-5%

An onshore natural gas industry would help keep gas prices down in Victoria.	28%	22%	23%	25%	6%	-3%
We need to urgently move away from coal as an energy source in Victoria towards cleaner energy sources.	63%	5%	59%	5%	4%	-1%
We need to act quickly to take advantage of the demand for natural gas.	28%	25%	20%	26%	8%	-1%
We need new industries like onshore natural gas in Victoria.	32%	21%	28%	19%	4%	2%
A government cannot stop progress like onshore natural gas development.	13%	44%	14%	41%	-1%	3%
The government needs to act to make Victoria attractive to this industry.	29%	22%	29%	22%	0%	-1%
Benefit sharing						
The benefits from an onshore natural gas industry would be shared across community to benefit most people.	26%	27%	21%	27%	5%	-1%
Government cannot ensure that the economic benefits of an onshore natural gas industry are shared properly amongst the community.	44%	13%	41%	12%	3%	1%
Industry impacts						
Tourism in parts of country Victoria would be negatively affected by onshore natural gas activities.	36%	10%	33%	10%	4%	0%
The impact on agriculture in Victoria would be negative.	30%	12%	29%	14%	1%	-2%
Farmers and other landowners could get better returns if there was an onshore natural gas industry in their area.	19%	19%	15%	19%	4%	0%
Potential risks – general						
Any risks involved in onshore natural gas operations are low.	9%	31%	10%	29%	-1%	2%
I think that an onshore natural gas industry would present environmental risks.	48%	9%	47%	8%	1%	1%
Potential risks – water						
The risks of contamination to surface water from onshore natural gas activities are unacceptably high.	32%	8%	34%	6%	-2%	2%
Onshore natural gas operations may contaminate aquifers and other water supplies.	42%	4%	40%	3%	2%	1%
The risks to underground water supplies from onshore natural gas are unacceptably high.	34%	8%	37%	6%	-3%	2%
The onshore natural gas operations may contaminate aquifers and other water supplies.	42%	4%	42%	4%	0%	0%
The chemicals that are used in fracking may damage water quality.	48%	4%	44%	3%	4%	1%
It is the fracking process that concerns me.	45%	10%	45%	8%	0%	2%
Potential risks – health						
There are no public health issues likely to arise from being near onshore natural gas activities.	11%	30%	8%	28%	2%	3%
There would be no health issues for those living near onshore natural gas operations.	9%	26%	9%	22%	0%	4%
Role of science and technology						
The technology involved in onshore natural gas is proven scientifically.	14%	13%	14%	13%	0%	0%
Scientists cannot be trusted to provide good advice	17%	38%	22%	23%	-5%	14%

to government on onshore natural gas matters.						
Scientists could monitor any possible risks involved in onshore natural gas operations and make sure they were safe.	53%	10%	43%	15%	10%	-6%
A science program to understand and monitor the possible impacts of a potential onshore natural gas industry on water supplies would ensure that there was no damage.	37%	18%	29%	21%	8%	-3%
I do not have faith in scientists' opinions about technology for onshore natural gas.	23%	33%	27%	24%	-4%	9%
I believe technology can solve most problems in the energy sector.	39%	17%	39%	15%	-1%	2%
The Victoria-wide opportunity						
The onshore natural gas industry could represent a large opportunity for the Victorian economy in terms of investment and jobs.	46%	9%	39%	11%	7%	-2%
Export opportunities for Victorian natural gas would generate investment and jobs for the State.	46%	12%	40%	12%	6%	0%
Local community impacts including visual amenity						
An onshore natural gas industry would not lower land values in the local area it operated in.	12%	35%	11%	35%	1%	-1%
An onshore natural gas industry would have a positive impact for people living in the area where operations were.	21%	21%	19%	20%	2%	1%
Onshore natural gas activities would be divisive or disruptive in the local communities where they might be located.	37%	9%	37%	5%	-1%	4%
The onshore natural gas industry would damage the views/visual amenity in the Victorian countryside.	38%	10%	35%	8%	3%	2%
Local employment in areas of onshore natural gas operation would increase.	48%	7%	40%	10%	8%	-3%
An onshore natural gas industry would not be visually ugly in the country landscape.	16%	31%	14%	25%	2%	6%
Farmer and business impacts						
Farmers and other landowners would be adequately compensated for any onshore natural gas disruption to their farming and other operations.	20%	23%	19%	23%	1%	0%
Local businesses in areas of onshore natural gas operations would benefit.	43%	11%	35%	12%	8%	-1%
Need for community consultation in future						
The local community would need to be extensively consulted before any onshore natural gas activity occurred in an area.	71%	2%	69%	2%	2%	0%
Farmers and other landowners should be able to refuse access to onshore natural gas activity on their land.	56%	7%	56%	7%	0%	0%
I do not believe that most of the Victorian community is well enough informed about the onshore natural gas industry.	60%	7%	64%	6%	-4%	1%
Attitude to companies involved						
The companies that might be involved in onshore natural gas activities are likely to be professional and expert in the way they conduct their operations.	34%	22%	30%	18%	4%	4%
Companies that might be in the onshore natural gas business cannot be trusted.	33%	14%	27%	11%	6%	3%

Regulation and control						
No amount of government rules and regulation can make an onshore natural gas industry satisfactory.	29%	18%	30%	15%	-2%	3%
The government would need to control companies involved in onshore natural gas activity strictly.	71%	2%	66%	2%	6%	0%
Effective government regulation of an onshore natural gas industry should be straightforward.	50%	12%	44%	13%	6%	-1%
Government can make sure there are sufficient regulations to create a sound onshore natural gas industry in Victoria.	45%	18%	39%	17%	5%	1%
Rehabilitation and compensation						
An onshore natural gas industry would need to restore and rehabilitate the landscape after it finished operations.	70%	3%	66%	2%	4%	1%
The government can ensure that farmers are compensated for disruption to their farming operations and other impacts.	55%	10%	46%	13%	9%	-3%
Personal attitudes to the environment and related aspects						
I am totally opposed to any onshore natural gas activity in Victoria.	23%	29%	25%	23%	-2%	5%
I would support the development of an onshore natural gas industry in Victoria.	25%	22%	22%	24%	3%	-2%
I would actively oppose an onshore natural gas industry in Victoria.	21%	30%	23%	26%	-2%	4%
I am uncertain about whether we should have an onshore natural gas industry in Victoria.	40%	24%	38%	23%	2%	1%
I am committed to environmental causes.	51%	9%	47%	9%	3%	-1%
I believe that urgent action is needed on climate change in Australia.	59%	13%	56%	11%	2%	2%
Global warming is a major and urgent problem for the world.	62%	12%	55%	11%	7%	1%
I believe having renewable sources of energy is of vital importance.	79%	3%	72%	3%	6%	1%

5.3 Attitudes in the potentially affected east and west geographic areas

Based on a geological reference map (provided) highlighting areas that might be most affected if the potential industry proceeded, the rural sample was boosted in the two potentially key areas, providing a sample of 125 in each area. This allowed the attitudes in these areas of Western and Eastern Victoria to be examined more specifically.

To provide a more direct contrast they were compared to the responses from metropolitan Melbourne.

	MAIN SAMPLE			AREA SAMPLE		
	Metro	**non metro /rural**	**total main sample**	**West Gas area**	**East Gas area**	**total potential gas area sample**
Definitely would support	8%	7%	**8%**	4%	6%	5%
Likely to support	22%	20%	**22%**	15%	6%	9%
May or may not	35%	32%	**35%**	34%	29%	31%
Unlikely to support	15%	17%	**15%**	16%	27%	23%
Definitely would not support	12%	13%	**12%**	25%	22%	23%
Don't know	9%	10%	**9%**	6%	11%	9%
Total	100%	100%	**100%**	100%	100%	100%

It is first noted that there are relatively fewer don't knows in the potentially affected areas, although the proportion in the middle (neither/nor) is around the same. Thus, people living in these areas are more likely to be aware of the issues and to have taken a position.

Overall, the respondents in these areas are more definitely against the idea that the potential benefits outweigh the costs. Around 1 in 3 (35%) disagree that this is the case compared to 19% agreeing. This level of more definite opposition to the potential industry continues in the other issues areas.

Some summary aspects are:

- 47% agree that benefits would be short-term and disadvantages long-term compared to 32% agree in the metro area.
- 18% agree that an onshore natural gas industry would help keep prices down in Victoria compared to 28% in the metro area.
- The perceived risk to water supplies is a particular concern for East West area people with 50% agreeing the risks to underground water supplies from onshore natural gas are unacceptably high compared to 34% in the metro area.
- They are more sceptical that the likelihood of a science program to understand and monitor the possible impacts of a potential onshore natural gas industry on water supplies would ensure that there was no damage, with only 22% agreeing with this compared to 37% of metro respondents.

- At the local level they are less likely to see increased employment benefits (37% agree compared to 48% in the metro area).

- Some 71% agree that farmers should be able to refuse access compared to 56% of those in the metro area[2].

- In the area of personal attitudes those living in the East and West areas have almost identical attitudes to climate change and the environment in general to those in Melbourne.

The East West regional people are thus somewhat more opposed to an onshore natural gas industry than their metropolitan counterparts.

	Metro		Total-Rural East and West Areas		Difference Metro minus East West Areas	
	% total agree	% total disagree	% total agree	% total disagree	% total agree	% total disagree
Views on net benefits from the potential industry						
On balance, the benefits far outweigh the costs.	20%	25%	12%	37%	8%	-12%
The potential benefits of onshore natural gas outweigh the potential costs and risks.	18%	26%	19%	35%	-2%	-9%
The potential benefits of onshore natural gas far outweigh the potential costs and risks.	14%	26%	16%	35%	-2%	-10%
I believe that the benefits of an onshore natural gas industry clearly outweigh its risks.	17%	26%	13%	37%	5%	-11%
The fact that the onshore natural gas industry is well established in other places makes me confident about its overall value to the community.	23%	30%	16%	44%	7%	-15%
Onshore natural gas would only provide short term benefits but disadvantages could be long term.	32%	13%	47%	8%	-15%	5%
The policy stance and the need to develop			0%	0%		
I believe that potential opportunity from possible onshore natural gas operations in Victoria are substantial.	31%	15%	25%	20%	6%	-6%
Developing an onshore natural gas industry is a low priority in the energy area.	25%	19%	36%	17%	-11%	2%
Natural gas is better for the environment than coal.	58%	3%	58%	8%	1%	-4%
An onshore natural gas industry in Victoria would ensure lower prices for natural gas for households.	26%	21%	20%	36%	6%	-15%
An onshore natural gas industry would help keep gas prices down in Victoria.	28%	22%	18%	35%	10%	-13%
We need to urgently move away from coal as an energy source in Victoria towards cleaner energy sources.	63%	5%	60%	7%	3%	-3%
We need to act quickly to take advantage of the demand for natural gas.	28%	25%	17%	36%	11%	-11%
We need new industries like onshore natural gas in Victoria.	32%	21%	24%	31%	8%	-10%
A government cannot stop progress like	13%	44%	11%	54%	2%	-10%

[2] See Footnote 4, page 30

onshore natural gas development.						
The government needs to act to make Victoria attractive to this industry.	29%	22%	20%	39%	9%	-17%
Benefit sharing						
The benefits from an onshore natural gas industry would be shared across community to benefit most people.	26%	27%	19%	36%	7%	-10%
Government cannot ensure that the economic benefits of an onshore natural gas industry are shared properly amongst the community.	44%	13%	50%	12%	-6%	1%
Industry impacts						
Tourism in parts of country Victoria would be negatively affected by onshore natural gas activities.	36%	10%	45%	12%	-9%	-2%
The impact on agriculture in Victoria would be negative.	30%	12%	34%	22%	-4%	-10%
Farmers and other landowners could get better returns if there was an onshore natural gas industry in their area.	19%	19%	13%	29%	6%	-10%
Potential risks – general			0%	0%		
Any risks involved in onshore natural gas operations are low.	9%	31%	10%	40%	-1%	-9%
I think that an onshore natural gas industry would present environmental risks.	48%	9%	63%	6%	-15%	3%
Potential risks – water						
The risks of contamination to surface water from onshore natural gas activities are unacceptably high.	32%	8%	45%	7%	-13%	1%
Onshore natural gas operations may contaminate aquifers and other water supplies.	42%	4%	54%	4%	-11%	0%
The risks to underground water supplies from onshore natural gas are unacceptably high.	34%	8%	50%	5%	-16%	3%
The onshore natural gas operations may contaminate aquifers and other water supplies.	42%	4%	52%	9%	-10%	-5%
The chemicals that are used in fracking may damage water quality.	48%	4%	55%	2%	-7%	2%
It is the fracking process that concerns me.	45%	10%	62%	9%	-17%	1%
Potential risks – health						
There are no public health issues likely to arise from being near onshore natural gas activities.	11%	30%	10%	37%	1%	-7%
There would be no health issues for those living near onshore natural gas operations.	9%	26%	11%	33%	-1%	-7%
Role of science and technology						
The technology involved in onshore natural gas is proven scientifically.	14%	13%	13%	23%	1%	-10%
Scientists cannot be trusted to provide good advice to government on onshore natural gas matters.	17%	38%	25%	29%	-8%	9%
Scientists could monitor any possible risks involved in onshore natural gas operations and make sure they were safe.	53%	10%	46%	17%	7%	-8%

A science program to understand and monitor the possible impacts of a potential onshore natural gas industry on water supplies would ensure that there was no damage.	37%	18%	22%	32%	14%	-14%
I do not have faith in scientist's opinions about technology for onshore natural gas.	23%	33%	29%	27%	-6%	5%
I believe technology can solve most problems in the energy sector.	39%	17%	42%	21%	-3%	-4%
The Victoria-wide opportunity			0%	0%		
The onshore natural gas industry could represent a large opportunity for the Victorian economy in terms of investment and jobs.	46%	9%	42%	15%	5%	-6%
Export opportunities for Victorian natural gas would generate investment and jobs for the State.	46%	12%	41%	20%	5%	-8%
Local community impacts including visual amenity						
An onshore natural gas industry would not lower land values in the local area it operated in.	12%	35%	14%	44%	-2%	-9%
An onshore natural gas industry would have a positive impact for people living in the area where operations were.	21%	21%	19%	30%	2%	-9%
Onshore natural gas activities would be divisive or disruptive in the local communities where they might be located.	37%	9%	48%	8%	-12%	1%
The onshore natural gas industry would damage the views/visual amenity in the Victorian countryside.	38%	10%	45%	12%	-7%	-2%
Local employment in areas of onshore natural gas operation would increase.	48%	7%	37%	19%	11%	-11%
An onshore natural gas industry would not be visually ugly in the country landscape.	16%	31%	11%	36%	4%	-5%
Farmer and business impacts						
Farmers and other landowners would be adequately compensated for any onshore natural gas disruption to their farming and other operations[3].	20%	23%	18%	30%	2%	-7%
Local businesses in areas of onshore natural gas operations would benefit.	43%	11%	37%	17%	6%	-6%
Need for community consultation in future			0%	0%		
The local community would need to be extensively consulted before any onshore natural gas activity occurred in an area.	71%	2%	76%	4%	-4%	-2%
Farmers and other landowners should be able to refuse access to onshore natural gas activity on their land.	56%	7%	71%	7%	-15%	1%
I do not believe that most of the Victorian community is well enough informed about the Onshore natural gas industry.	60%	7%	61%	11%	-1%	-4%
Attitude to companies involved						
The companies that might be involved in onshore natural gas activities are likely to be professional and expert in the way they	34%	22%	31%	21%	4%	1%

[3] See Footnote 4, page 30

conduct their operations.						
Companies that might be in the onshore natural gas business cannot be trusted.	33%	14%	36%	14%	-3%	0%
Regulation and control						
No amount of government rules and regulation can make an onshore natural gas industry satisfactory.	29%	18%	36%	18%	-7%	0%
The government would need to control companies involved in onshore natural gas activity strictly.	71%	2%	73%	4%	-1%	-2%
Effective government regulation of an onshore natural gas industry should be straightforward.	50%	12%	44%	18%	6%	-5%
Government can make sure there are sufficient regulations to create a sound onshore natural gas industry in Victoria.	45%	18%	39%	22%	6%	-4%
Rehabilitation and compensation						
An onshore natural gas industry would need to restore and rehabilitate the landscape after it finished operations.	70%	3%	74%	2%	-5%	1%
The government can ensure that farmers are compensated for disruption to their farming operations and other impacts.	55%	10%	46%	17%	9%	-7%
Personal attitudes to the environment and related aspects						
I am totally opposed to any onshore natural gas activity in Victoria.	23%	29%	29%	25%	-6%	3%
I would support the development of an onshore natural gas industry in Victoria.	25%	22%	17%	37%	8%	-14%
I would actively oppose an onshore natural gas industry in Victoria.	21%	30%	26%	25%	-5%	5%
I am uncertain about whether we should have an onshore natural gas industry in Victoria.	40%	24%	42%	26%	-2%	-2%
I am committed to environmental causes.	51%	9%	59%	11%	-8%	-2%
I believe that urgent action is needed on climate change in Australia.	59%	13%	63%	12%	-4%	1%
Global warming is a major and urgent problem for the world.	62%	12%	64%	13%	-1%	-1%
I believe having renewable sources of energy is of vital importance.	79%	3%	79%	3%	-1%	1%

Deviations over 10% highlighted.

Differences between the East and West potentially affected areas

Although the sample size is limited, it is worth noting some differences between the East and West area samples.

Firstly whilst the 'don't know' level was about the same (around one quarter) there were far less respondents sitting in the middle in Western Victoria. Only around 15% would typically say neither 'agree' nor 'disagree' in the West compared to around 25% in the East. Thus, people in Western Victoria seem more likely to take a definite position on most issues.

Overall, they (the West) are more positive about the industry and its potential benefits. They are, however, more concerned about water contamination issues. This could be seen as somewhat surprising but may highlight a greater concern about water supplies in the western part of the state.

The western sample is, however, more positive about both science monitoring the risks and the role of government.

	West area		East Area		Differences - West minus East	
	% total agree	% total disagree	% total agree	% total disagree	% total agree	% total disagree
Views on net benefits from the potential industry						
On balance, the benefits far outweigh the costs.	17%	41%	9%	35%	7%	6%
The potential benefits of onshore natural gas outweigh the potential costs and risks.	22%	39%	18%	33%	4%	7%
The potential benefits of onshore natural gas far outweigh the potential costs and risks.	16%	42%	16%	32%	0%	10%
I believe that the benefits of an onshore natural gas industry clearly outweigh its risks.	17%	43%	11%	35%	6%	9%
The fact that the onshore natural gas industry is well established in other places makes me confident about its overall value to the community.	21%	48%	14%	42%	6%	5%
Onshore natural gas would only provide short term benefits but disadvantages could be long term.	50%	10%	45%	6%	5%	4%
The policy stance and the need to develop						
I believe that potential opportunity from possible onshore natural gas operations in Victoria are substantial.	34%	21%	21%	20%	13%	2%
Developing an onshore natural gas industry is a low priority in the energy area.	42%	20%	34%	16%	8%	5%
Natural gas is better for the environment than coal.	60%	11%	57%	6%	4%	6%
An onshore natural gas industry in Victoria would ensure lower prices for natural gas for households.	24%	38%	18%	35%	6%	3%
An onshore natural gas industry would help keep gas prices down in Victoria.	28%	35%	14%	35%	14%	1%
We need to urgently move away from coal as an energy source in Victoria towards cleaner energy sources.	72%	7%	55%	7%	18%	-1%
We need to act quickly to take advantage of the demand for natural gas.	26%	41%	12%	33%	14%	8%
We need new industries like Onshore natural gas in Victoria.	37%	34%	18%	29%	18%	5%
A government cannot stop progress like onshore natural gas development.	16%	59%	9%	52%	7%	7%
The government needs to act to make Victoria attractive to this industry.	27%	34%	17%	41%	10%	-7%
Benefit sharing						
The benefits from an onshore natural gas industry would be shared across community to benefit most people.	29%	39%	15%	35%	14%	3%
Government cannot ensure that the economic benefits of an onshore natural gas industry are shared properly amongst the community.	55%	11%	48%	12%	7%	-1%
Industry impacts						
Tourism in parts of country Victoria would be negatively affected by onshore natural gas activities.	47%	21%	44%	8%	3%	13%
The impact on agriculture in Victoria would be negative.	35%	31%	33%	17%	2%	14%

Farmers and other landowners could get better returns if there was an onshore natural gas industry in their area.	21%	35%	10%	26%	11%	8%
Potential risks – general						
Any risks involved in onshore natural gas operations are low.	12%	44%	9%	38%	3%	5%
I think that an onshore natural gas industry would present environmental risks.	60%	11%	65%	4%	-4%	6%
Potential risks – water						
The risks of contamination to surface water from onshore natural gas activities are unacceptably high.	54%	7%	41%	6%	12%	1%
Onshore natural gas operations may contaminate aquifers and other water supplies.	63%	3%	49%	5%	13%	-2%
The risks to underground water supplies from onshore natural gas are unacceptably high.	56%	6%	47%	4%	9%	2%
The onshore natural gas operations may contaminate aquifers and other water supplies.	62%	6%	47%	10%	15%	-4%
The chemicals that are used in fracking may damage water quality.	63%	4%	52%	2%	11%	2%
It is the fracking process that concerns me.	72%	4%	57%	11%	15%	-7%
Potential risks – health						
There are no public health issues likely to arise from being near onshore natural gas activities.	17%	38%	7%	36%	10%	2%
There would be no health issues for those living near onshore natural gas operations.	20%	35%	7%	32%	13%	3%
Role of science and technology						
The technology involved in onshore natural gas is proven scientifically.	17%	28%	11%	21%	6%	7%
Scientists cannot be trusted to provide good advice to government on onshore natural gas matters.	24%	34%	26%	26%	-1%	8%
Scientists could monitor any possible risks involved in onshore natural gas operations and make sure they were safe.	52%	23%	43%	15%	9%	8%
A science program to understand and monitor the possible impacts of a potential onshore natural gas industry on water supplies would ensure that there was no damage.	37%	34%	16%	31%	21%	4%
I do not have faith in scientists' opinions about technology for onshore natural gas.	26%	37%	30%	23%	-4%	14%
I believe technology can solve most problems in the energy sector.	43%	21%	41%	22%	2%	-1%
The Victoria-wide opportunity						
The onshore natural gas industry could represent a large opportunity for the Victorian economy in terms of investment and jobs.	56%	17%	35%	14%	21%	3%
Export opportunities for Victorian natural gas would generate investment and jobs for the State.	54%	22%	35%	19%	18%	3%
Local community impacts including visual amenity						
An onshore natural gas industry would not lower land values in the local area it operated in.	21%	50%	11%	41%	10%	9%
An onshore natural gas industry would have a positive impact for people living in the area where operations were.	25%	37%	16%	27%	9%	10%
Onshore natural gas activities would be divisive or	57%	12%	44%	6%	13%	5%

disruptive in the local communities where they might be located.						
The onshore natural gas industry would damage the views/visual amenity in the Victorian countryside.	49%	16%	43%	10%	6%	6%
Local employment in areas of onshore natural gas operation would increase.	56%	18%	28%	19%	27%	-1%
An onshore natural gas industry would not be visually ugly in the country landscape.	20%	44%	7%	32%	13%	12%
Farmer and business impacts						
Farmers and other landowners would be adequately compensated for any onshore natural gas disruption to their farming and other operations.	24%	37%	14%	27%	10%	11%
Local businesses in areas of onshore natural gas operations would benefit.	51%	17%	30%	17%	21%	0%
Need for community consultation in future.						
The local community would need to be extensively consulted before any onshore natural gas activity occurred in an area.	88%	1%	70%	6%	18%	-4%
Farmers and other landowners should be able to refuse access to onshore natural gas activity on their land.	77%	7%	67%	7%	10%	0%
I do not believe that most of the Victorian community is well enough informed about the onshore natural gas industry.	70%	13%	57%	10%	13%	3%
Attitude to companies involved						
The companies that might be involved in onshore natural gas activities are likely to be professional and expert in the way they conduct their operations.	46%	20%	23%	21%	23%	-1%
Companies that might be in the onshore natural gas business cannot be trusted.	39%	20%	34%	12%	5%	8%
Regulation and control						
No amount of government rules and regulation can make an onshore natural gas industry satisfactory.	46%	22%	31%	17%	15%	5%
The government would need to control companies involved in onshore natural gas activity strictly.	81%	5%	69%	3%	12%	2%
Effective government regulation of an onshore natural gas industry should be straightforward.	57%	20%	37%	16%	20%	4%
Government can make sure there are sufficient regulations to create a sound onshore natural gas industry in Victoria.	48%	25%	35%	21%	13%	5%
Rehabilitation and compensation	0%	0%	0%	0%		
An onshore natural gas industry would need to restore and rehabilitate the landscape after it finished operations.	86%	2%	69%	2%	17%	0%
The government can ensure that farmers are compensated for disruption to their farming operations and other impacts.	55%	23%	42%	14%	13%	9%
Personal attitudes to the environment and related aspects	0%	0%	0%	0%		
I am totally opposed to any onshore natural gas activity in Victoria.	36%	29%	26%	24%	9%	6%
I would support the development of an onshore natural gas industry in Victoria.	25%	39%	13%	35%	11%	4%
I would actively oppose an onshore natural gas industry in Victoria.	39%	26%	20%	25%	19%	1%

I am uncertain about whether we should have an onshore natural gas industry in Victoria.	47%	32%	39%	23%	8%	9%
I am committed to environmental causes.	67%	8%	56%	12%	11%	-4%
I believe that urgent action is needed on climate change in Australia.	64%	14%	63%	10%	1%	4%
Global warming is a major and urgent problem for the world.	65%	11%	63%	13%	2%	-2%
I believe having renewable sources of energy is of vital importance.	83%	0%	77%	4%	6%	-4%

Differences over 10% highlighted.

6.0 Sources of information on onshore natural gas

In the initial part of the survey respondents were asked where they had seen or heard anything about onshore natural gas.

Overall some 52% said they had heard something and nominated various media, with TV being the main media mentioned.

Q2-5 "*Where have you seen or heard any information about onshore natural gas? This may be information about the onshore natural gas industry or its activities."*

Region	TV news	TV documentaries	Newspapers	The internet	Radio	Friends and Colleagues	Groups or Organisations that you have had contact with or are a member
Metro	62%	31%	42%	41%	20%	21%	10%
Rural	70%	35%	47%	30%	21%	26%	14%
Total	65%	32%	43%	38%	20%	22%	11%

Base: The 52% who said they had heard something about onshore natural gas

Later in the survey respondents were asked about information from various organisations and bodies.

Typically around 1 in 5 to 1 in 10 respondents mentioned each organisation, with awareness levels being slightly higher outside Melbourne when it came to the Victorian Government, Lock the Gate Alliance, the Conservation Foundation and the Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF).

Table Q2-8 *"Have you heard or seen any information about onshore natural gas from the following organisations in the past couple of years?"*

Organisation	**Region**		**Total**
Victorian Government	Metro	Rural	
Yes	15%	22%	17%
No	59%	50%	56%
Don't know/Not sure	27%	29%	27%
	100%	100%	100%
The Lock the Gate Alliance	Metro	Rural	
Yes	7%	20%	11%
No	74%	60%	71%
Don't know/Not sure	18%	20%	19%
	100%	100%	100%
The Conservation Foundation	Metro	Rural	
Yes	11%	15%	12%
No	66%	58%	64%
Don't know/Not sure	23%	27%	24%
	100%	100%	100%
Victorian Farmers Federation	Metro	Rural	
Yes	12%	23%	15%
No	66%	53%	63%
Don't know/Not sure	21%	24%	22%
	100%	100%	100%
Energy industry bodies	Metro	Rural	
Yes	17%	14%	16%
No	58%	59%	58%
Don't know/Not sure	26%	27%	26%
	100%	100%	100%
From energy companies such as AGL, Santos and Lakes Oil	Metro	Rural	
Yes	19%	16%	18%
No	55%	56%	55%
Don't know/Not sure	26%	27%	27%
	100%	100%	100%

Base – total sample

When asked if they had seen or heard anything specific from the list of different aspects below, around 1 in 3 noted the economic benefits and the need for further gas supplies for Victoria in the future.

Around 40% noted the fracking process and the risk to water supplies.

The exposure of information on these aspects was markedly higher in the non-metropolitan areas.

Q2-9 *"Have you heard or seen anything about the following aspects of onshore natural gas?"*

Aspect	**Region**		**Total**
The possible economic benefits of onshore natural gas to the Australian economy.	Metro	Rural	
Yes	33%	36%	34%
No	47%	44%	47%
Don't know/Not sure	19%	20%	20%
	100%	100%	100%
What is happening with the onshore natural gas industry in NSW and/or Qld.	Metro	Rural	
Yes	21%	27%	22%
No	63%	50%	60%
Don't know/Not sure	17%	23%	18%
	100%	100%	100%
The process of hydraulic fracturing.	Metro	Rural	
Yes	38%	44%	40%
No	48%	38%	45%
Don't know/Not sure	14%	18%	15%
	100%	100%	100%
The nature of onshore natural gas activity in the USA.	Metro	Rural	
Yes	20%	22%	21%
No	65%	61%	64%
Don't know/Not sure	15%	17%	15%
	100%	100%	100%
The need for further future gas supplies in Victoria.	Metro	Rural	
Yes	34%	33%	34%
No	51%	46%	50%
Don't know/Not sure	15%	22%	16%
	100%	100%	100%
The possible environmental risk to water supplies.	Metro	Rural	
Yes	42%	53%	45%
No	44%	34%	42%
Don't know/Not sure	14%	14%	14%
	100%	100%	100%

The possible economic benefits of onshore natural gas to the Victorian economy	Metro	Rural	
Yes	25%	29%	26%
No	57%	49%	55%
Don't know/Not sure	18%	22%	19%
	100%	100%	100%
The impact on the visual environment because of the appearance of processing facilities.	Metro	Rural	
Yes	25%	30%	26%
No	58%	51%	56%
Don't know/Not sure	17%	19%	18%
	100%	100%	100%
General environmental concerns with the onshore natural gas industry	Metro	Rural	
Yes	44%	49%	45%
No	44%	37%	42%
Don't know/Not sure	12%	15%	13%
	100%	100%	100%
The possible increased level of prices for natural gas in Victoria if an onshore natural gas industry is not established.	Metro	Rural	
Yes	23%	25%	23%
No	60%	53%	58%
Don't know/Not sure	17%	22%	18%
	100%	100%	100%

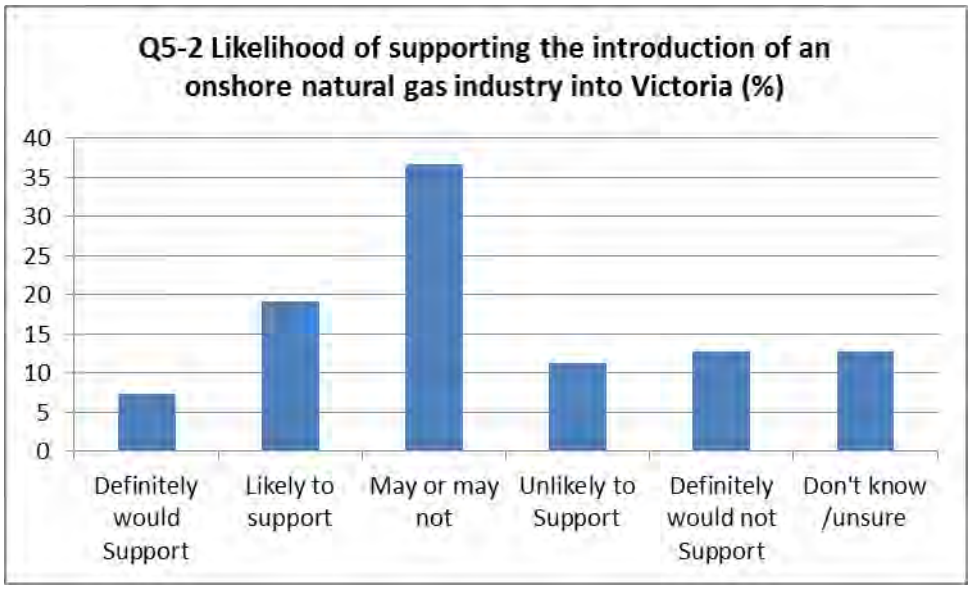
7.0 Interest in learning more about onshore natural gas

In the final part of the survey (Q5-2) respondents were again asked about their stance on the industry.

As noted, this was similar to the first response and some 27% expressed support and 24% against with the remainder undecided.

Q5-2 *"Likelihood of supporting the introduction of an onshore natural gas industry into Victoria?"*

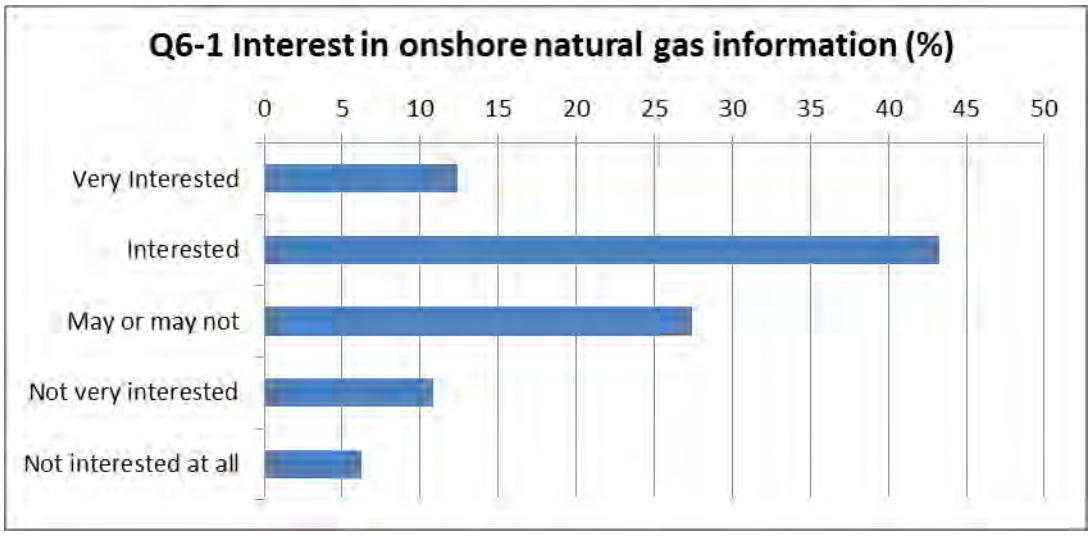
	% response
Definitely would support	7.4
Likely to support	19.2
May or may not	36.7
Unlikely to support	11.3
Definitely would not support	12.8
Don't know/unsure	12.8
Total	100



There was very high degree of engagement with this survey and a large proportion of those surveyed expressed interest in learning more about onshore natural gas.

We asked at this point: *"How interested would you be in learning more about onshore natural gas in Victoria and elsewhere?"* The response showed a very definite interest in learning more with 56% saying that they were interested or very interested.

"How interested would you be in learning more about onshore natural gas in Victoria and elsewhere?"	**% response**
Very Interested	12.4
Interested	43.3
May or may not	27.4
Not very interested	10.8
Not interested at all	6.2



It is noteworthy that this interest is shown by both opponents and supporters.

Some 80% of definite supporters are very interested as are 49% of definite non supporters.

Amongst the undecided and don't know groups we have about 50% saying that they are very interested or interested.

Interest in receiving information relative to level of support for onshore natural gas

Q6-*1 Interest in onshore natural gas information?*	**Definitely would support**	**Likely to support**	**May or may not**	**Unlikely to support**	**Definitely would not support**	**Don't know /unsure**
Very interested	47%	15%	5%	10%	15%	11%
Interested	37%	54%	43%	44%	34%	40%
May or may not be	10%	22%	39%	23%	23%	21%
Not very interested	6%	8%	10%	19%	15%	10%
Not interested at all	1%	2%	3%	4%	14%	19%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Asked how much they would rely on different sources of information, CSRIO was given very high credibility.

However, Government websites and environmental organisations also rated well, with about 20% saying they would rely on them a lot.

Q6-*2 How much would you rely on...for advice?* – Government websites on energy matters	**%**
A lot	21.9
A little	56.4
Not at all	21.7
Total	100
Q6-2 *How much would you rely on...for advice?* – Energy industry websites	
A lot	13.9

A little	50.1
Not at all	36
Total	100
Q6-2 *How much would you rely on...for advice?* – Printed reading material on onshore natural gas matters	
A lot	19.9
A little	57
Not at all	23.1
Total	100
Q6-2 *How much would you rely on...for advice?* – The CSIRO	
A lot	42.4
A little	39
Not at all	18.6
Total	100
Q6-2 *How much would you rely on...for advice?* – Other websites	
A lot	12.6
A little	60.1
Not at all	27.3
Total	100
Q6-2 ***How much would you rely on...for advice?* – Information from environmental organisations**	
A lot	28.9
A little	49.4
Not at all	21.7
Total	100

8.0 Comments of the role of government

In the examination of specific issues in the section on 'regulation and control' it was noted that there is a strong sense that the government needs to strictly control onshore natural gas activity (70% agree) and a reasonable level of confidence that they can make sure there are sufficient regulations (44% agree) to achieve this.

There is a core proportion of sceptics (29% agree) who believe no amount of government regulation can make the industry satisfactory.

Regulation and control	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Total
No amount of government rules and regulation can make an onshore natural gas industry satisfactory.	13%	16%	25%	15%	3%	28%	100%
The government would need to control companies involved in onshore natural gas activity strictly.	34%	36%	13%	2%	0%	15%	100%

Effective government regulation of an onshore natural gas industry should be straightforward.	14%	34%	20%	8%	5%	20%	100%
Government can make sure there are sufficient regulations to create a sound onshore natural gas industry in Victoria.	10%	34%	20%	11%	7%	19%	100%

Respondents in the section on these aspects were asked *"Q3 What do you think is the main thing a State government should do about an Onshore natural gas industry if it is feasible in Victoria?"*

Their responses were classified into broad areas and are shown below. Top of the list are the need for unbiased research and strict regulation. The detailed responses are provided in Appendix 6.

Q4-3 ***"What do you think is the main thing a State government should do about an onshore natural gas industry if it is feasible in Victoria?"***	**% response**
Q4-3 *Government should* – Unbiased research into all implications/safety	21.4%
Q4-3 *Government should* – Ensure minimal negative environmental impacts	19.4%
Q4-3 *Government should* – Strict regulation/oversight	18.5%
Q4-3 *Government should* – Don't know	11.2%
Q4-3 *Government shou*ld – Increase awareness/transparency	9.7%
Q4-3 *Government should* – Prevent it altogether	8.8%
Q4-3 *Government sh*ould – Safe for the community	7.4%
Q4-3 *Government should* – Consult local community/land owners	6.8%
Q4-3 *Government should* – Compensate land owners appropriately	6.4%
Q4-3 *Government should* – Encourage development	5.9%
Q4-3 *Government should* – None/nothing/no comment	5.6%
Q4-3 *Government should* – Make gas affordable/available	5.2%
Q4-3 *Government should* – Make sure the local community benefits (e.g. profit/discounts)	3.9%
Q4-3 *Government should* – Strong enforcement of penalties for breaches of conduct	3.6%
Q4-3 *Government should* – Its only profiteering regardless of the cost	2.8%
Q4-3 *Government should* – Don't trust Government to look after the people	2.5%
Q4-3 *Government should* – Invest in renewable energy	2.3%
Q4-3 *Government should* – Allow land owners to deny access to their properties	1.7%
Q4-3 *Government should* – Don't know enough to comment	1.3%
Q4-3 *Government should* – Ensure knowledgeable/experienced operation	1.3%
Q4-3 *Government should* – Other	1.0%
Q4-3 *Government shou*ld – Create local employment	0.9%
Q4-3 *Government shou*ld – Don't use fracking	0.9%
Q4-3 *Government should* – Tax companies heavily	0.5%
Q4-3 *Government should* – Don't export	0.1%

9.0 The profiles of attitude groups

In their initial response about their attitude to a potential onshore gas industry in the initial survey question, respondents expressed their likelihood of 'supporting' or 'not supporting' the industry.

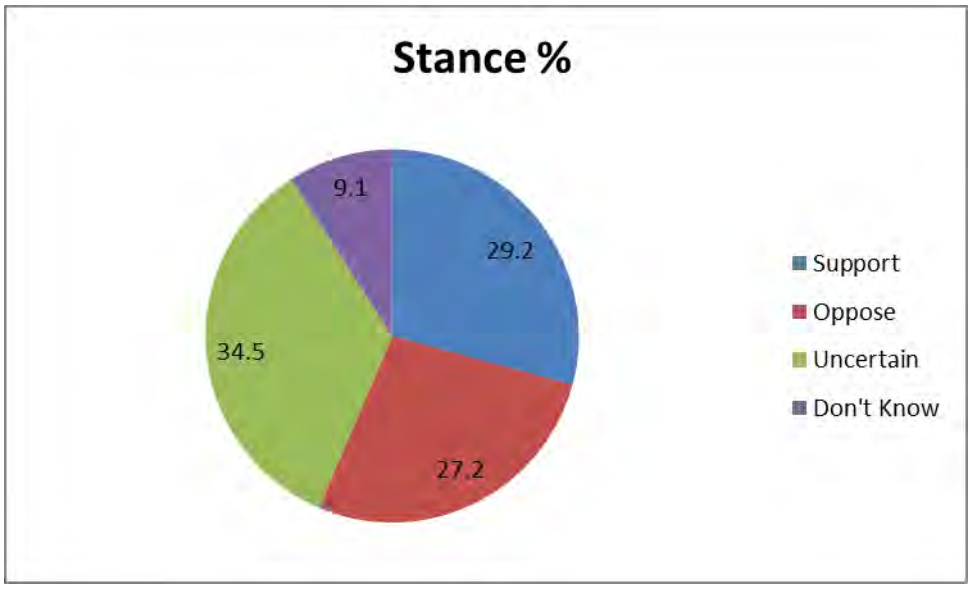
Q2-10 *"Likelihood of supporting the introduction of an onshore natural gas industry in Victoria?"*

	% response
Definitely would support	7.8
Likely to support	21.4
May or may not	34.5
Unlikely to support	14.8
Definitely would not support	12.5
Don't know	9.1
Total	100

By grouping the 'likely to support' and 'unlikely to support' we have the following summary position of their 'stance'.

Stance – Likelihood of supporting a potential ONG (based on Q2-10)

Likelihood of supporting a potential onshore natural gas industry(Q2-10)	% response
Support	29.2
Oppose	27.2
Uncertain	34.5
Don't Know	9.1
Total	100



When we look at the knowledge level of these four groups it appears that there is a slight tendency of those opposing to consider they know 'a lot' or 'a fair bit' (25%) compared to those supporting (20%).

Those who are uncertain tend to acknowledge more that they 'don't know much at all' (49%) and 88% of the 'don't knows' consider that this is their knowledge level.

	Stance				Total
Q2-7 *Knowledge level*? – onshore natural gas by Stance	**Support**	**Oppose**	**Uncertain**	**Don't Know**	
A lot	6%	2%			3%
A fair bit	14%	23%	10%	2%	14%
A little	43%	48%	41%	10%	41%
Not much at all	36%	27%	49%	88%	43%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

In terms of their demographic profile, there is a slight tendency for females to be more opposed than males (55% vs 45%) but there are no age differences in the profiles, except for the 'don't knows' who have a younger age profile.

As noted earlier, non-metropolitan respondents have a higher representation in the 'oppose' group (28% versus 24% in the metro area).

	Stance				Total
AGE	**Support**	**Oppose**	**Uncertain**	**Don't Know**	
18-24	9%	11%	11%	15%	11%
25-29	10%	8%	13%	11%	11%
30-39	13%	14%	17%	26%	16%
40-49	19%	22%	17%	22%	19%
50-54	12%	8%	11%	6%	10%
55-64	17%	16%	13%	10%	15%
65+	20%	21%	17%	9%	18%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Stance				**Total**
GENDER	**Support**	**Oppose**	**Uncertain**	**Don't Know**	
M (Male)	52%	45%	48%	52%	49%
F (Female)	48%	55%	52%	48%	51%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Stance				**Total**
REGION	**Support**	**Oppose**	**Uncertain**	**Don't Know**	
Metro	76%	72%	77%	71%	75%
Rural	24%	28%	23%	29%	25%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

When the other socio-economic aspects of each group are considered including employment status, income level and education level, the differences between the 'oppose' and the 'support' groups are not significant.

Much the same can be concluded for the uncertain group. The sample of 'don't knows' is small but the same conclusion could be made.

Thus, in terms of profile it appears that the main difference between the 'oppose' and 'support groups' is the gender bias.

	Stance				**Total**
Q7-2 *Employment status?*	**Support**	**Oppose**	**Uncertain**	**Don't Know**	
Employed	49%	45%	51%	59%	49%
Retired	27%	28%	23%	13%	24%
Currently unemployed	9%	10%	9%	17%	10%
Student	5%	8%	8%	7%	7%
Business owner	5%	3%	5%	1%	4%
Other (please specify)	6%	7%	5%	3%	5%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Stance				**Total**
Q7-2 *Household income?*	**Support**	**Oppose**	**Uncertain**	**Don't Know**	
Less than $30,000	15%	16%	14%	10%	14%
$30,000 - $49,999	15%	16%	15%	9%	15%
$50,000 - $69,999	16%	16%	14%	15%	15%
$70,000 - $99,999	20%	17%	16%	8%	17%
$100,000 - $150,000	13%	10%	16%	14%	13%
$150,000+	6%	5%	10%	6%	7%
Rather not say	15%	21%	15%	37%	19%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Stance				**Total**
Q7-3 Education level?	**Support**	**Oppose**	**Uncertain**	**Don't Know**	
Postgraduate	17%	13%	14%		13%
Undergraduate	20%	22%	19%	24%	21%
TAFE/Diploma	29%	33%	30%	27%	30%
High school	29%	27%	33%	44%	31%
Primary school	1%	2%	0%		1%
Other (please specify)	1%	1%	2%		1%
Rather not say	1%	3%	2%	5%	2%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Another perspective on the stance groups is their attitude to the environment and the extent to which a potential industry is seen as a more general environmental cause.

As noted earlier 49% of respondents in the community agreed that they were committed to environmental causes. This is higher in the 'oppose' group at 65% but it should be noted that 50% of the 'support' group also agree with this attitude.

This suggests that the potential onshore gas industry should not be seen in simple environmental cause terms. Opposition is certainly linked to a personal commitment to environmental causes but this cannot be regarded as the whole story.

	Stance				Total
I am committed to environmental causes	**Support**	**Oppose**	**Uncertain**	**Don't Know**	
Strongly agree	9%	37%	10%	14%	17%
Agree	41%	28%	31%	22%	32%
Neither agree nor disagree	38%	26%	42%	37%	36%
Disagree	8%	5%	7%	9%	7%
Strongly disagree	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%
Don't know	2%	3%	8%	15%	5%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

One area there is a definite difference between the groups is in their experience of natural gas. The supporters were far more likely to have and use natural gas connected to their home.

	Stance				Total
S4-A1 *Have natural gas?*	**Support**	**Oppose**	**Uncertain**	**Don't Know**	
Yes	83%	65%	69%	66%	71%
No	10%	29%	18%	15%	19%
Don't know	7%	6%	13%	20%	10%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

This difference was evident in both metro and non-metro areas. In metro areas some 89% of the support group had natural gas compared to 71% in the opposed group. In rural areas the difference was 64% versus 51%.

REGION			**Stance**				**Total**
			Support	**Oppose**	**Uncertain**	**Don't Know**	
Metro	*S4A1 Have natural gas?*	Yes	89%	71%	71%	69%	76%
		No	4%	22%	13%	8%	12%
		Don't know	8%	8%	16%	23%	12%
	Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Rural	*S4A1 Have natural gas?*	Yes	64%	51%	61%	54%	58%
		No	32%	45%	37%	31%	37%
		Don't know	5%	4%	3%	15%	5%
	Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total	*S4A1 Have natural gas?*	Yes	83%	65%	69%	65%	71%
		No	10%	29%	18%	15%	19%
		Don't know	7%	7%	13%	21%	10%
	Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

One of the interesting aspects of the groups is that those who are opposed are less likely to be interested in learning more about onshore natural gas than supporters. Only 51% of the oppose group were interested compared to 71% of the support group.

	Stance				Total
Q6-1 *Interest in Onshore natural gas information*?	**Support**	**Oppose**	**Uncertain**	**Don't Know**	
Very Interested	19%	12%	10%	3%	13%
Interested	52%	39%	43%	32%	43%
May or may not	22%	26%	32%	35%	27%
Not very interested	5%	16%	12%	8%	11%
Not interested at all	2%	8%	4%	22%	6%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100 %

In summary, there are some insights from examining the profiles of the different stance groups but in terms of the demographic and socio-economic variables, the differences are limited except for the fact that females are more inclined to be opposed.

The other major difference in group characteristics is that those in homes with natural gas are markedly more likely to be supporters.

Appendix 3.1
Victorian community attitudes to onshore natural gas – questionnaire

1. INTRODUCTION

This survey is being conducted to obtain your views on the potential development of an onshore natural gas industry in Victoria. We would appreciate your input to this study so that representative attitudes of the Victorian community are considered in deciding whether or not Victoria should develop such an industry.

The survey will take about 15 minutes of your time.

Your answers are strictly confidential and for research purposes only.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study.

Please note that there are a number of check questions in the survey to ensure you read each statement carefully. You must therefore be careful to answer each question in a consistent way.

2. SECTION 1: SCREENING

First before we start could you tell us something about you?

Q1. Which age group do you fall into? *Single selection only*

Under 18	1	Terminate
18-24	2	
25-29	3	
30-39	4	
40-49	5	
50-54	6	
55-64	7	
65+	8	
Prefer not to say	99	Terminate

Q2. Are you …? *Single selection only*

M (Male)	1
F (Female)	2
X (Indeterminate/Intersex/Unspecified)	3

Q3 what is your postcode?

We will need to group postcodes for the western and eastern Victorian country areas to get a minimum of 150 in each of these areas using either online or telephone interviews.

Q4a. **Do you have natural gas in your home?**	Yes ..... 1 No ..... 2 Don't know 3

Q4a. **Do you use natural gas in your home?**	Yes..... No..... Don't know.....	Q4b. If yes to Q4a – is your natural gas you use from being connected to the mains or in cylinders?	Mains connected..... Cylinders..... Both.....

SECTION 2: AWARENESS AND KNOWLEDGE ABOUT ONSHORE NATURAL GAS

The rationale for this section is to define the level of awareness on **onshore Natural Gas***, including Coal Seam Gas, and allow separate analysis of those who consider they know a fair amount about the* **onshore Natural Gas** *activities at the analysis stage.*
Those who do not know much are given basic factual information before being exposed to the generally perceived advantages and disadvantages.
In this section an initial gauge of support for an **onshore Natural Gas** *industry in Victoria is sought*.

First some questions about your awareness and knowledge of onshore Natural Gas.

Q1	Have you heard anything about onshore Natural Gas in Australia or other parts of the world?	Yes ..... 1 No ..... 2 goto Q3

Q2 How much do you feel you know about onshore Natural Gas?	
1. A lot	1
2. A fair bit	2
3. A little	3
4. Not much at all	4

Q3	Have you heard anything about Coal Seam Gas, which is a type of onshore Natural Gas, in Australia or other parts of the world?	Yes ..... 1 No ..... 2 goto Information Statement.

Q4 How much do you feel you know about Coal Seam Gas?	
1. A lot	1
2. A fair bit	2
3. A little	3
4. Not much at all	4

Q5 Where have you seen or heard any information about onshore Natural Gas. This may be information about the onshore Natural Gas industry or its activities **More than one may apply – randomise**	
1. TV news	1
2. TV documentaries	2
3. Newspapers	3
4. The internet	4

5. Radio	5
6. Friends and Colleagues	6
7. Groups or Organisations that you have had contact with or are a member of	7
8. Other… Please specify	

Q6 Do you have any comments from what you know or have heard about onshore Natural Gas? **Please type in details below**

INFORMATION STATEMENT

The rationale for this statement is that it summarises the basic nature of onshore Natural Gas *and the issues as they are presented on the Government website and can be expected to be communicated by various media in the future, if* onshore Natural Gas *activities such as exploration occurred in Victoria.*

INFORMATION STATEMENT – What is onshore Natural Gas and Coal Seam Gas? – All to read

onshore Natural Gas is found deep underground in sedimentary rocks. The majority of gas supplied to Victorian consumers to date has been produced from offshore, under the seabed.

onshore Natural Gas is found around Australia including in New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia and the Northern Territory. If commercially viable reserves of natural gas are found on shore in Victoria the development of an onshore natural gas industry might be possible in the future.

There are a number of different forms of on shore natural gas that might be found in Victoria under the ground, including tight gas, shale gas, coal seam gas and conventional gas. The type of gas found depends on the type of rock in which the gas is stored.

The methods used to produce gas from these different sources may also vary and in some cases involve a process known as "hydraulic fracturing" (also sometimes referred to as "fracking") which involves pumping a fluid consisting of water, sand and selected chemicals under high pressure into rock containing gas. The fluid creates narrow fractures in the seam and releases the gas into a gas well.

Hydraulic fracturing is only employed for extracting underground gas in some circumstances and is not necessary for some types of onshore natural gas.

Q6	Has this information prompted you to recall more about what you know about onshore Natural Gas?	Yes ..... 1 No 2

Q7 Please tell us how much do you feel you know about the onshore Natural Gas industry in general –not just in Victoria and not including what you have just read ?	
1. A lot	1
2. A fair bit	2
3. A little	3
4. Not much at all	4

Q8 Have you heard or seen any information about onshore Natural Gas from the following organisations in the past couple of years?	**Yes**	**No**	**Don't know/ Not sure**
1. Victorian Government	1	2	3
2. The Lock the Gate Alliance	1	2	3
3. The Conservation Foundation	1	2	3
4. Victorian Farmers Federation	1	2	3
5. Energy Industry bodies	1	2	3
6. From energy companies such as AGL, Santos and Lakes Oil?	1	2	3
7. Other. Please specify……	1	2	3

Q9 Have you heard or seen anything about the following aspects of onshore Natural Gas?	**Yes**	**No**	**Don't know/ Not sure**
The possible economic benefits of onshore Natural Gas to the Australian economy	1	2	3
What is happening with the onshore Natural Gas industry in NSW and/or Qld	1	2	3
The process of hydraulic fracturing.	1	2	3
The nature of onshore Natural Gas activity in the USA	1	2	3
The need for further future gas supplies in Victoria.	1	2	3
The possible environmental risk to water supplies	1	2	3
The possible economic benefits of onshore Natural Gas to the Victorian economy	1	2	3
The impact on the visual environment because of the appearance of processing facilities.	1	2	3
General environmental concerns with the onshore Natural Gas industry	1	2	3
The possible increased level of prices for natural gas in Victoria if an onshore Natural Gas industry is not established	1	2	3

Q 10 Considering what you currently know about the onshore Natural Gas Industry how likely would you be to support the introduction of the industry in Victoria if it turned out to be feasible in the future.						
	Definitely would Support	Likely to support	May or may not	Unlikely to Support	Definitely would not Support	Don't know /unsure
Likelihood of supporting the introduction of an onshore Natural Gas industry in Victoria	1	2	3	4	5	6

Q11 What are your main reasons for that attitude towards the onshore Natural Gas industry? **Please type in details below**

SECTION 3: GENERAL ATTITUDES TO AN ONSHORE NATURAL GAS Industry in Victoria

The rationale for this section is to gauge reactions to various arguments made in the debate about onshore Natural Gas. These involve its potential risks and its potential benefits as put forward by advocates and opponents. Some statements cover the respondent's direct personal views.

You may be aware that the introduction of onshore Natural Gas operations in some parts of the world has sometimes been controversial. The issues often involve consideration of its benefits, costs and risks.

There may be no commercially viable reserves of onshore Natural Gas available in Victoria and hence no possibility for an onshore Natural Gas industry in the future. At this stage no one knows since substantial exploration has not yet been undertaken.

Many of the following questions are <u>hypothetical</u> but we are interested in your current attitudes to a potential onshore Natural Gas industry as part of understanding community views.
If you feel that you do not know enough about some issues please simply answer "don't know".

Q1a. The following are statements that various people have made about the introduction on an onshore Natural Gas industry and its economic benefits, risks and regulation. Please tell us if you agree or disagree with them. ROTATE STATEMENTS

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know
The onshore Natural Gas industry could represent a large opportunity for the Victorian economy in terms of investment and jobs	1	2	3	4	5	6
An onshore Natural Gas industry would help keep gas prices down in Victoria	1	2	3	4	5	6
The onshore Natural Gas industry would damage the views/visual amenity in the Victorian countryside	1	2	3	4	5	6
The risk of contamination of water supplies is unacceptably high in onshore Natural Gas operations	1	2	3	4	5	6
I am totally opposed to any onshore Natural Gas activity in Victoria	1	2	3	4	5	6
It is the fracking process that concerns me	1	2	3	4	5	6
The impact on agriculture in Victoria would be negative	1	2	3	4	5	6
I do not believe that most of the Victorian community is well enough informed about the onshore Natural Gas industry to have an opinion	1	2	3	4	5	6

on it.						
The technology involved in onshore Natural Gas is proven scientifically	1	2	3	4	5	6
The potential benefits of onshore Natural Gas far outweigh the potential costs and risks.	1	2	3	4	5	6
onshore Natural Gas operations may contaminate aquifers and other water supplies	1	2	3	4	5	6
The chemicals that are used in fracking may damage water quality.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Any risks involved in onshore Natural Gas operations are low	1	2	3	4	5	6
The fact that the onshore Natural Gas industry is well established in other places makes me confident about its overall value to the community.	1	2	3	4	5	6
On balance, the benefits far outweigh the costs	1	2	3	4	5	6
I would support the development of an onshore Natural Gas industry in Victoria	1	2	3	4	5	6
We need new industries like onshore Natural Gas in Victoria	1	2	3	4	5	6
Export opportunities for Victorian natural gas would generate investment and jobs for the State	1	2	3	4	5	6
We need to act quickly to take advantage of the demand for natural gas.	1	2	3	4	5	6
The benefits from an onshore Natural Gas industry would be shared across community to benefit most people.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Natural gas is better for the environment than coal.	1	2	3	4	5	6
An onshore Natural Gas industry in Victoria would ensure lower prices for natural gas for households	1	2	3	4	5	6

Q 1b The following are more statements that various people have made about the possible introduction on onshore Natural Gas industry. Please tell us if you agree or disagree with them. ROTATE STATEMENTS						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know
The potential benefits of onshore Natural Gas outweigh the potential costs and risks.	1	2	3	4	5	6
The onshore Natural Gas operations may contaminate aquifers and other water supplies	1	2	3	4	5	6
The chemicals that are used in fracking may damage water quality.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Any risks involved in onshore Natural Gas operations are low	1	2	3	4	5	6
The fact that the onshore Natural Gas industry is well established in other places makes be confident about its overall value to the community.	1	2	3	4	5	6
On balance, the benefits outweigh the costs	1	2	3	4	5	6
I would support the development of an onshore Natural Gas industry in Victoria	1	2	3	4	5	6
We need new industries like onshore Natural Gas in Victoria	1	2	3	4	5	6
We need to act quickly to take advantage of the demand for natural gas.	1	2	3	4	5	6
The benefits from an onshore Natural Gas industry would be shared across community to benefit most people.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Natural gas is better for the environment than coal.	1	2	3	4	5	6
The risks of contamination to surface water from onshore Natural Gas activities are unacceptably high.	1	2	3	4	5	6
The risks to underground water supplies from onshore Natural Gas are unacceptably high.	1	2	3	4	5	6
There would be no health issues for those living near onshore Natural Gas operations.	1	2	3	4	5	6
onshore Natural Gas activities would be divisive or disruptive in the local communities where they might be located.	1	2	3	4	5	6
onshore Natural Gas would only provide short term benefits but disadvantages could be long term	1	2	3	4	5	6

Thinking about the country areas where onshore Natural Gas operations might be located – if an onshore Natural Gas industry is feasible in the future and approved – we would like your views on the following aspects.

Q 2 The following are statements that various people have made about the introduction on an onshore Natural Gas industry. Please tell us if you agree or disagree with them. ROTATE STATEMENTS						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know
Tourism in parts of country Victoria would be negatively affected by onshore Natural Gas activities.	1	2	3	4	5	6
An onshore Natural Gas industry would not lower land values in the local area it operated in.	1	2	3	4	5	6
The impact on agriculture in Victoria would be negative						
Local employment in areas of onshore Natural Gas operation would increase.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Local businesses in areas of onshore Natural Gas operations would benefit	1	2	3	4	5	6
Farmers and other landowners would be adequately compensated for any onshore Natural Gas disruption to their farming and other operations.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Farmers and other landowners should be able to refuse access to onshore Natural Gas activity on their land.	1	2	3	4	5	6
An onshore Natural Gas industry would not be visually ugly in the country landscape.	1	2	3	4	5	6
An onshore Natural Gas industry would need to restore and rehabilitate the landscape after it finished operations.	1	2	3	4	5	6
An onshore Natural Gas industry would have a positive impact for people living in the area where operations were.	1	2	3	4	5	6
The local community would need to be extensively consulted before any onshore Natural Gas activity occurred in an area.	1	2	3	4	5	6
There are no public health issues likely to arise from being near onshore Natural Gas activities.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Farmers and other landowners could get better returns if there was an onshore Natural Gas industry in their area.						

SECTION 4: ATITUDES TO REGULATION AND MANAGEMENT OF AN onshore Natural Gas Industry in Victoria

This section is to gauge reactions to specific risks and management aspects of a potential onshore Natural Gas industry. Questions on the summary cost benefits of the industry are also covered.
In the next battery of questions we also check the extent to which people are aware of the current government approach to onshore Natural Gas. It provides the basis of determining the credibility and need for communication on key issues.
Awareness of current Victorian Government initiatives is also checked on.

onshore Natural Gas operations are regulated by a number of State and Commonwealth government agencies. Some people have made the following statements about government and the organisations involved in the potential development of an onshore Natural Gas industry.

<u>The questions relate to any government</u> not just the current State government. Please answer the questions for government in a general sense.

Again note that these questions are hypothetical at this stage since it is not known if Victoria has the commercially viable reserves required to develop an onshore Natural Gas industry and whether or not this would be approved in the future.

Q 2. Please tell us if you agree or disagree with these statements. ROTATE STATEMENTS						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know
Government can make sure there are sufficient regulations to create a sound onshore Natural Gas industry in Victoria.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Companies that might be in the onshore Natural Gas business cannot be trusted.	1	2	3	4	5	6
The government needs to act to make Victoria attractive to this industry	1	2	3	4	5	6
Effective government regulation of an onshore Natural Gas industry should be straightforward.	1	2	3	4	5	6
A government cannot stop progress like onshore Natural Gas development.	1	2	3	4	5	6
The government can ensure that farmers are compensated for disruption to their farming operations and other impacts.	1	2	3	4	5	6
No amount of government rules and regulation can make an onshore Natural Gas industry satisfactory.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Government cannot ensure that the economic benefits of an onshore Natural Gas industry are shared properly amongst the community.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Scientists could monitor any possible risks involved in onshore Natural Gas operations and make sure they were safe.	1	2	3	4	5	6
A science program to understand and monitor the possible impacts of a potential onshore Natural Gas industry on water supplies would ensure that there was no damage.	1	2	3	4	5	6
The companies that might be involved in onshore Natural Gas activities are likely to be professional and expert in the way they conduct their operations.	1	2	3	4	5	6
The government would need to control companies involved in onshore Natural Gas activity strictly.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Scientists cannot be trusted to provide good advice to government on onshore Natural Gas matters.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Q3 What do you think is the main thing a State government should do about an onshore Natural Gas industry if it is feasible in Victoria? **Please type in details below**

SECTION 5: YOUR PERSONAL ATTITUDES

Whilst some personal attitudes have been covered in previous sections this section looks at these in more detail. The objective is to understand the context for respondent's position on some issues. We also do a final check on the respondent's views at this point.

We would like you to tell us more about your personal attitudes to some of the issues surrounding various energy related matters including onshore Natural Gas. An onshore Natural Gas industry in Victoria may not be commercially viable but we would like your views on it if it did turn out to be a possibility.

Q 1. Please tell us if you agree or disagree with these statements. ROTATE STATEMENTS						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know
I am committed to environmental causes	1	2	3	4	5	6
I believe that potential opportunity from possible onshore Natural Gas operations in Victoria are substantial	1	2	3	4	5	6
I think that an onshore Natural Gas industry would present environmental risks	1	2	3	4	5	6
I believe that urgent action is needed on climate change in Australia	1	2	3	4	5	6
Global warming is a major and urgent problem for the world	1	2	3	4	5	6
I believe having renewable sources of energy is of vital importance.						
I believe that the benefits of an onshore Natural Gas industry clearly outweighs its risks	1	2	3	4	5	6
I would actively oppose an onshore Natural Gas industry in Victoria	1	2	3	4	5	6
I do not have faith in scientists opinions about technology for onshore natural gas	1	2	3	4	5	6
I believe technology can solve most problems in the energy sector	1	2	3	4	5	6
We need to urgently move away from coal as an energy source in Victoria towards cleaner energy sources.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Developing an onshore Natural Gas industry is a low priority in the energy area.	1	2	3	4	5	6
I am uncertain about whether we should have an onshore Natural Gas industry in Victoria.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Q 2	Again considering what you currently know about the onshore Natural Gas or Coal Seam Gas industry how likely would you be to support the introduction of the industry in Victoria- if it turned out to be feasible - in the future.					
	Definitely would Support	Likely to support	May or may not	Unlikely to Support	Definitely would not Support	Don't know /unsure
Likelihood of supporting the introduction of an onshore Natural Gas industry into Victoria	1	2	3	4	5	6

Section 6 – Sources of Information

In the next part of this survey we are asking about the sources and types of information that you can use to inform yourself about the onshore Natural Gas industry.

Q 1	How interested would you be in learning more about onshore Natural Gas in Victoria and elsewhere				
	Very Interested	Interested	May or may not	Not very interested	Not interested at all
Interest in onshore Natural Gas information	1	2	3	4	5

Q2 There are a number of different sources of advice and information that people can rely on to help them assess the benefits and costs of an onshore Natural Gas industry in Victoria. How much would you say that you might rely on advice from the following sources:	A lot	A little	Not at all
Government Websites on Energy matters	1	2	3
Energy Industry websites	1	2	3
Printed reading material on onshore Natural Gas matters	1	2	3
THE CSIRO	1	2	3
Other websites	1	2	3
Information from environmental organisations	1	2	3
Other you would prefer…..please specify	1	2	3

Section 7 – More information about you

Finally could you please tell us a little more about yourself?

Q1.	**Which of the following best describes your household structure? Are you…**	Single, living alone ..... Single, sharing accommodation with other adults ..... Single with dependent children ..... Married/defacto, with dependent children ..... Married/defacto, with no dependent ..... Married/defacto, children have left home.....

Q2.	**What is your work position?**	Employed .....1 Retired .....2 Currently unemployed .....3 Student.....4 Business owner .....5 Other please specify.....6

Q2a Ask - those who live outside Melbourne – do you live in?		Large town/City.....1 In or near a Small town .....2 Rural area.....3 6

Q2b If they live in a rural area ask –Do you own or operate a farm?		Yes.....1 No.....2

Q2c If they live in a rural area ask – Do you run a business or work on a farm?		Yes.....1 No.....2

Q2d.	**And into which of the following groups would your total annual household**	Less than $30,000 1

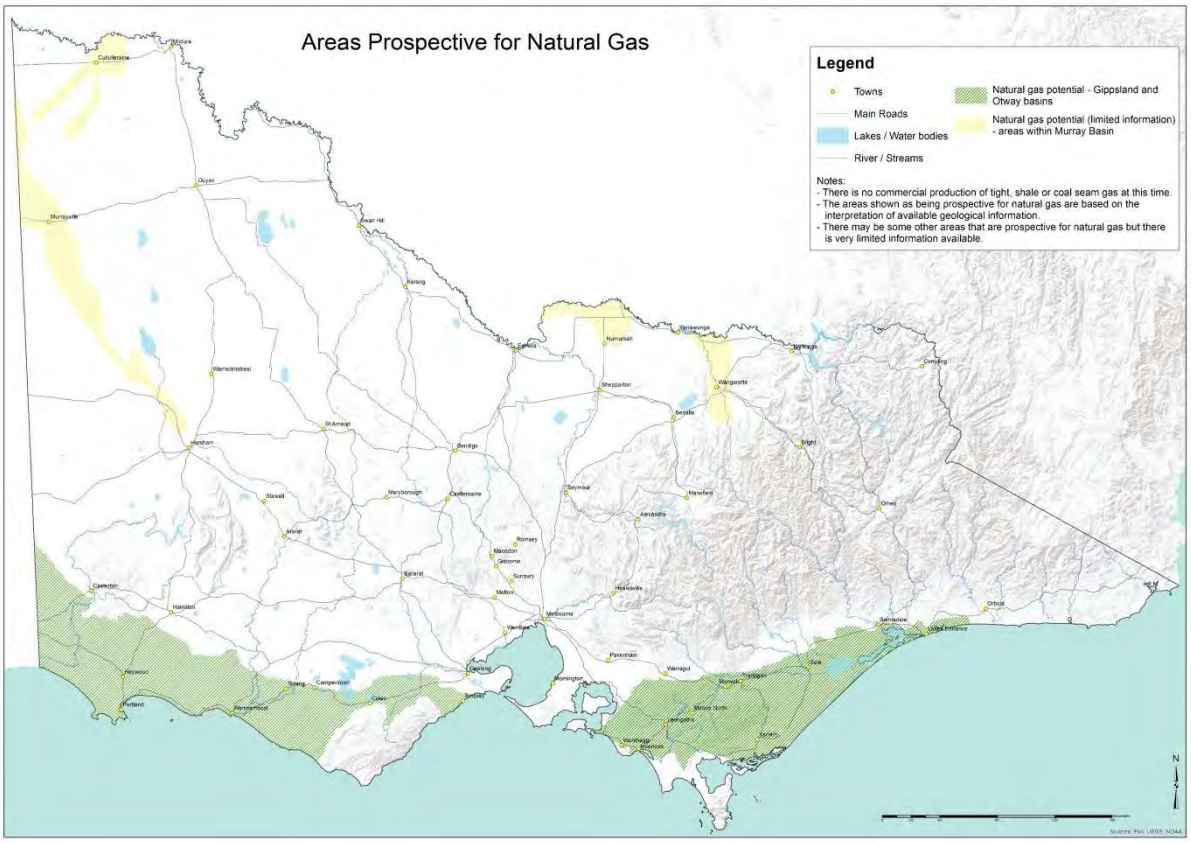
income fall before tax?	$30,000 - $49,999 .....2 $50,000 - $69,999 .....3 $70,000 - $99,999 .....4 $100,000 - $150,000 .....5 $150,000+.....6 Rather not say 7

Q3.	**What is the highest level of education you have completed?** **CODE ONE ONLY**	POSTGRADUATE ..... UNDERGRADUATE..... TAFE/DIPLOMA ..... HIGH SCHOOL..... PRIMARY SCHOOL .....

Thank you very much for your participation in this survey!

Appendix 3.2
Map for potential east and west areas used in sampling

Appendix 3.2 – Map for Potential East and West areas Used in Sampling.



Appendix 3.3.
Information statement

Information Statement

INFORMATION STATEMENT – What is Onshore Natural Gas and Coal Seam Gas? – All to read

Onshore Natural Gas is found deep underground in sedimentary rocks. The majority of gas supplied to Victorian consumers to date has been produced from offshore, under the seabed.

Onshore Natural Gas is found around Australia including in New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia and the Northern Territory. If commercially viable reserves of natural gas are found on shore in Victoria the development of an onshore natural gas industry might be possible in the future.

There are a number of different forms of on shore natural gas that might be found in Victoria under the ground, including tight gas, shale gas, coal seam gas and conventional gas. The type of gas found depends on the type of rock in which the gas is stored.

The methods used to produce gas from these different sources may also vary and in some cases involve a process known as "hydraulic fracturing" (also sometimes referred to as "fracking") which involves pumping a fluid consisting of water, sand and selected chemicals under high pressure into rock containing gas. The fluid creates narrow fractures in the seam and releases the gas into a gas well.

Hydraulic fracturing is only employed for extracting underground gas in some circumstances and is not necessary for some types of onshore natural gas.

Appendix 3.4
Comments about what they have heard about onshore natural gas

Appendix 3.4 – Comments about what they have heard about onshore natural gas

Q2-6 Do you have any comments from what you know or have heard about Onshore Natural Gas? From Section 2 of Survey.

May not be environmentally friendly
Negative reports of the procedure fracking. Very undesirable in my area of southern Victoria. Will damage our water reserves.
NO FRACKING SHOULD BE ALLOWED
a dubious energy option
A lot of unknowns and risks to the environment; and affectation of the livelihood of those people living on or near these sites.
Accessing this gas could cause problems with underground water tables
All I have heard is how bad it is, how they are killing the environment and creating sinkholes. Generally very bad stuff.
all I have heard it should not be used as it screws the environment
All of the news I have seen has been negative towards coal seam gas.
A lot of people seem concerned about the effect on the ground water.
An economic and environmental disaster waiting to happen using a process that consumes more BTU's that it produces, which has been an abject failure everywhere it has been promoted. The choice of Exxon Mobil for a development in Gippsland is extreme
Apparently the system is gas fracking where water or compressed air is forced into subterranean areas to release gas but it can cause problems by polluting underground areas
Appears to be queries about its extraction process and consequent effects on the environment e.g. on underground water sources, on agricultural land.
As long as its not affecting our farmers
bad for the environment
Believe there are fields in most states. Goes hand in hand with oil exploration
Big companies bully land owners, can destroy property, maybe poison ground water, profit is no excuse for the disregard of communities and land holders, they say there is gas in the oceans to last for a long time.
Big concerns over destroying the local water table
Coal seam gas (fracking) is not wanted. The companies that want the fracking could not give two hoots about destroying the environment for their corporate greed.
Coal seam gas is not good for the environment - part of the way onshore natural gas is obtained - so would not be happy with that. I have heard other methods are better.
Coal Seam Gas is not very environmentally friendly. I heard and saw reports about the devastation of agricultural land, for instance the Hunter Valley in N.S.W.
Coal Seam Gas is poorly understood and VERY dangerous.
Coal seam gas or onshore natural gas is bad for the environment and prioritises gas above farmers and irrigation and the natural environment
Coal seam gas sites are causing great disruption to our farmers, splitting communities due to changes in values. There is a danger of polluting our water supplies. There are upsets to housing availability, claims of illness due to noise and pollution
coal steam gas should be banned
Concerns re damage to the environment.
could be risky to the environment
Could be very dangerous to the environment
CSG should not be allowed!
Current Onshore Natural Gas technology has not shown to be safe. It is messy, high waste, expensive extraction with little Gas/investment return. There are other better developed technologies already extracting usable energy with minimal risk.
Damage to environment as a result of ""Fracking"", mining for coal seam gas.

Dangerous to the underground water supply and farming
Deeply concerned
Developed extensively in the USA. Some types require fracking. There are claims that fracking has the potential of polluting groundwater. Other problems, some not well defined, have also been mentioned.
doesn't seem like a good idea due to the way the gas is taken from the earth
Don't agree with Fracking
don't drill
drill into ground release gas can catch fire
environmental issues
Even without too much information, anyone with common sense knows this method is dangerous, History shows you what has happened in America after this kind of mining. the remove matter underground and do not replace in, and we are seeing more and
Farmers are not happy about their pastures being destroyed or damaged by the companies moving in to extract the coal seam gas. They have my sympathy.
Farmers in NSW & Qld and other conservationists are sure fracking affects groundwater quality and supply. When India and China plus USA and Europe realise that something has to be done about slowing global warming, development of these resources seem
Farmers say it contaminates ground water and poisons stock and crops
fracking
FRACKING
Fracking represents a real threat to underground water suppliers. The chemicals used are problematic and some concern is felt regarding tracking causing seismic activity.
Fracking is bad because of the chemicals leaking into water supplies, etc.
Fracking is dangerous - it could poison underground water?
Fracking poisons water supplies and renders the environment around the sites absolutely unliveable
Fracking seems to be a concern but I don't know enough to comment
Fracking can be dangerous to underground water and the environment.
From what I have heard Natural Gas is a cleaner energy, but still a non-renewable, fossil fuel. I think large companies should spend their time and money finding ways to use more renewable sources for energy.
From what I have heard, not a great idea for the natural environment
From what I saw I can't really draw any conclusion as to whether it is a good or bad thing definitively, but for the most part it sounds as if it has some bad effects.
Gas is trapped in rocks, drill down to release the gas from the rocks.
Gas mining companies need to take more consideration about communities around close and very close to where they wish to mine. They also need to take into account land owners, agricultural businesses etc. that are affected by mines. They should not be
getting it may affect water quality in area
Good for the country.
Good idea provided that it does not stop people farming
good natural source of energy
Good option
Good product
Hard to separate the truth from the hype on both sides. Friends on farm have had a bad experience with gas company severely messing up their land and not making it useable again.
have head conflicting stories about whether it is good/bad
Have heard a lot of negatives about how CSG can affect water storage/streams. Also doco on areas in USA where water table has been badly affected.
have only really heard the name but don't remember anything about it
Have some environmental concerns
Haven't paid particular attention to any detail other than noting it is another source of energy
Having such a source here in Australia creates opportunities for industry and the user

Heard a lot about Fracking and the impact it is having on the environment
heard how it can damage the environment
Though I feel it is good to extract on-shore gas for domestic use, I am sceptical about exporting it. I have heard rumours, which no-one wants to deny, that we pay more for natural gas locally than the exporters get for it as an export.
I am afraid I know very little. I remember seeing documentaries years ago in the Uk where coal seam gas was considered a hazard to miners
I am against this form of obtaining natural gas
I am concerned about the effect of fracking on our artesian and ground water supplies (which are of critical importance in my area) and some sympathy with many farmers who seem to oppose it. However the organised opposition groups appear to overreact.
I am happy to have onshore natural gas, it is the best and cheapest fuel for domestic use
I am not comfortable with coal seam gas.
I am not in favour of it
I am not in favour of this industry
I am not in favour of extracting coal seam gas through hydraulic fracturing. I am concerned about water quantity and water quality. Also the amount of land wasted for this process.
I am not sure of the facts regarding coal seam gas.
I am not sure that I like how land is being taken over for the purpose of establishing sites to search for this gas.
I am wondering if it is safe
I am very concerned that we do not fully understand the long term effects of this in process. Both from an environmental and social health prospective. I do not understand why we need to collect these resources given that we seem to have a large amount
I believe it also called fracking, and has caused problems in America
I believe it includes fracking and I am definitely against it
I believe it involves a process called fracking. I further believe that such fracking is extremely environmentally dangerous.
I believe it is where a company taps into natural Gas reserves and pipes it though to homes
I believe not good for the environment but not sure
I believe that based on the information and experience from other countries that have been using onshore natural gas, like the USA, the risk to the environment is too great to further developed an onshore natural gas industry in Australia
I believe that it needs to be investigated further, as there is confusing conflicting information about
I believe that the process of fracking is safe and it will not harm the artesian water system
I believe that we should do more research into onshore natural gas before given more permits
I believe there could be problems with contamination of underground water. The chemicals that would be used could cause problems.
I do not believe it is a good process to pursue due to the environmental damage that it does to water supplies, farmland, people's lives. Documentaries I have seen show that the gas is not controlled, the thousands of wells leak gas
I do not like the way in which exploration rights seem to over ride the rights of property owners. I find reporting emotive and hard to distinguish the fact from fiction.
I do NOT want this to happen near my town or anywhere in Australia. I am well aware that is happening in Australia. I do NOT agree with how these companies come on privately owned land and start drilling
I don't believe in fracking
I don't have any information about Onshore gas
I don't know a lot about it but what I have heard is that mining for gas is detrimental to the environment.
I don't know enough to comment but my general feeling is negative
I don't like the idea of fracking at all. I think we would be better off with other power sources like solar.
I don't think a lot of people are convinced it's not an environmental problem
I don't think enough is known, at least publicly, about the effects of collecting coal seam gas.

I don't think it is a particularly good idea - I have heard some things through CWA of Victoria and I am not in favour - I also heard some things from a person who was running for council and was not in favour - I don't think it is necessary
I feel ""Fracking"" is a bad thing for the underground aquifers with waste materials leeching into the water supplies underground causing pollution which leads to tainted water for people and stock on farms
I feel that it will damage the environment
I feel we should be doing more to improve our use of renewable sources like wind and solar although I acknowledge that these still need a lot of development
I find it distressing to see the results of coal seam gas exploration and collection, I fear the ground becomes ruined and is no longer useful for original use, people become sick due to exposure, and the pipelines are extensive and unsightly, ground water contaminated.
I have concerns about the bi-products of coal seam gas and the potential difficulties in deposing these bi-products in a responsible and environmentally manner
I have concerns about the fracking process, that it might permanently damage the earth
I have heard about the practice called 'fracking' to obtain gas from coal seams underground. I am opposed to this process.
I have heard coal seam gas is bad
I have heard people complaining about having it in their area.
I have heard that Coal Seam Gas extraction can be dangerous
I have no opinion as I am unaware of the benefits
I have read about protests from people living in areas in Victoria where coal seam gas industry is proposed who are afraid of contamination to the soil and environment
I have read that people in Queensland have been protesting against it
I have some concerns of toxins getting into the water table
I have some knowledge about unconventional csg exploration. From what I can ascertain it is an industry which mars our landscape and uses methods which remain in the environment for an unacceptably long period of time. I am not in favour of it.
I have some reservations with regard to coal seam gas and methods currently available
I hear that it is still in its experimental stage and that other countries are leaps and bounds ahead of us in issues concerning Onshore Natural gas.
I just heard the gas is from the sea base.
I know it comes from WA, impacts of fracturing also being discussed
I Know it First Came Into Use In Victoria In late 1960's or Early 70's & Is less Smelly & More Efficient
I know that FRACKING to obtain 'onshore gas' MUST NEVER HAPPEN in Victoria.
I know that there is a large amount of natural gas in NSW and western Victoria.
I really don't know anything about it. Just seen it on social media pages.
I regard fracking as a potentially extremely dangerous form of extraction and do not favour it under any circumstance. I do not know of any other method by which Onshore Natural Gas could be extracted safely and efficiently.
I strongly believe that 'fracking' should not be permitted at any cost until all dangers to the water table and unreasonable access to private property are fully addressed.
I think it is a good and useful idea
I think it is a necessary next step in gas exploration
I think it is a terrible idea. The risks to water reserves far out-weigh any kind of positive outcome this may have. I also believe that the rules associated with the mining are appalling. It has no respect for families, for community health
I think that it can create a number of problems for the people who love in the area where the gas is being extracted. I think more of an effort should be put into exploring alternative fuels instead of gas
I think we should be doing more to get it out of the ground. If other countries can do it safely why can't we? Green groups have too much power and using adverse reports to stop the industry
I understand that if it is not done carefully there can be environmental costs, such as damage to the water table. Cases in America where drinking water was contaminated by gas/fuel

I understand that ONS is extracted by a method called fracking where a mixture of chemicals is pumped down a bore to fracture the rock or whatever to allow the gas to flow, I also have heard that this method can contaminate ground water
I understand that there are concerns on how it will affect productive farming land and how it will affect aquifers.
I understand there is considerable community concern regarding CSG
I worry about pollution and the effect on water supplies
I would like to know more about it, but at the moment it is not something I am in favour of.
I would like to know more about this subject please.
I would need to know more about this natural gas before I could comment
I am very much against coal stream gas
I'd be wanting to see a lot more research done on this matter to ensure the environment is not damaged as a result of CSG wells etc. It's a known fact that the Coalition both federal and state are environmental vandals and couldn't give a rat's arse
if it includes fracking I'm opposed to the idea
if it involves Fracking then its bad news for the environment
If it refers to cracking, then I do not endorse the practice
If its fracking you can shove it
If 'Onshore Natural Gas' is a new euphemism for 'Coal Seam Gas' then I am totally opposed to it if it involves 'fracking' in ANY way. Fracking has already caused enormous damage to aquifers in other countries and elsewhere in Australia
If we are talking about tracking, I am against it due to the ground water issue
If you are referring to CSG, much more research and data collection needs to be under taken in regards to the effects on specific water tables and aquifers. Whilst it offers a relatively cheap supply of domestic gas, the science needs to be done
I'm not sure if this is where companies can come onto your property and start digging for gas.
I'm totally against it!
I'm worried about fracking, the little I know about it and the research I've done on the subject hasn't been very positive
In this region the commentary is often negative, but I don't know enough about it to offer an opinion.
increases carbon into the atmosphere - adds to climate change in negative way
is a very divisive subject
Is this sometimes called fracking?
Issue seems to have split people’s opinions - whether it is good is bad for environment, localities etc. As it doesn't appear to affect area I live in have not taken too much notice of it.
It appears some people don't want to have it explored or produced near where they live
It appears to be being pushed even though there are questions about its safety.
It can impact on the flora and fauna
It causes a lot of damage and pollution, particularly to ground water and river systems
It could be great new money -earner for Australia!
it could do a lot of damage to the environment
it could pollute the nature reserves
It gets in the drinking water
It involves injecting water etc. into the ground to extract the gas. Sometimes called fracking. Very dangerous process and other countries are finding many environmental problems.
it is bad for farming and food security
It is been discussed on whether coal seam gas can be maintained as a sustainable energy source. it's competitiveness against nuclear energy
It is called fracking
it is destructive
It is getting sold overseas which is pushing up domestic prices. The government need to step in.

it is going to be sold overseas and we will pay more for gas next year if this happens
it is not a great idea - it ruins the water table
It is of concern in areas such as farming for example, as there are questions about pollution of underground water that is used to irrigate crops and livestock. This pollution could be caused by the processes used to extract the natural gas.
It is of great benefit to Australia as it seems we export it at a cheaper rate than we can get. I also have concerns about the way it changes the scenery in remote areas
It may affect the water in the artesian basin.
It poisons the ground with hundreds of chemicals needed to extract it.
It seems a lot of farmers are unhappy about it, I do remember seeing protests against it being reported on the TV however I do believe it is a viable way of extracting natural gas.
It seems like a good form of gas, but a lot of farmers oppose it.
It seems to be a negative thing for the environment
It seems to be a subject that polarises opinion. People seem to be either for it or VERY against it!
it seems to be creating a lot of comments
It should be good for the environment
it somehow effects the ground water
It was always an option
It will harm the water table and ruin farm land.
It worries me that in a state so small as Victoria there will be more pollution and desecration
It's a bad idea and is not the solution to our climate problems.
It's a bad thing: causes environmental and health issues for those who live near the fracking.
its a gas
it’s a great source of clean energy
It's bad
It's environmentally bad Poisons water tables Wastes usable water
It's inevitable
Its more environmentally friendly than other types
It's not real good for the environment
its really good and more environment friendly
Its taking away peoples country properties
I've heard about shale and coal seam gas. I've also heard a lot of negative things about fracking, the process used to extract the gas.
I've heard that there are a lot of objections in the areas where mining is occurring, particularly from the agricultural sector
I've only heard of coal seam gas which uses fracking to remove the gas. There is a lot of community concern about whether this is a safe method of gas production.
Joint venture Victoria and Gippsland to research natural gas such as coal seam
just about companies applying for exploration licences
Just heard about WA government wanting to tap into it
Just that it is rather controversial and it is hard to know whether it affects the natural water table or not.
Just that it might not be good for the water table
Just that residents local to where the gas seam may be located have objected to the removal from their land/s.
just that they are looking into it
l am opposed to it
Land owners, farmers don't seem to want it. Many states or areas in USA have banned it. People say it uses to much water and it destroy existing underground water.
Like most emerging trends or technologies some initial concern over appropriate development.
Mainly about concerns with fracking

Mainly negative
Many don't like the way it is obtained. hasn't got a good reputation
Many people are not happy about it
many people don't like fracking on their property because it is dangerous
mining process effects underground water table
more research needs to be done
Most Australian farmers seem very against it
Most of what I have heard is negative due to environmental damage especially to the water table
My Friends work for companies producing or piping it
natural gas is cleaner energy and we should use it there are some concerns in Queensland about pollution to ground water
Needs strict supervision, guidelines and rules.
Negative feedback...local area was investigated for a mining company, created local negative feedback in paper. People don't want it.
negative reaction
newspeak
No guarantee that tapping into supply will not harm the water table.
No I consider myself ambivalent on the subject
no, I have only heard of the term but know little about it
not good for our water supply & the environment
Not good for the environment
Not in favour of coal seam gas
Not really as I don't know a lot about it is fracking something to do with it? I don't know
Not really but I do know it's not very environmentally friendly to collect the gas in this way.
Not really other than it is primarily found in Queensland in Australia
Not really, if it is a resource waiting to be utilised, go ahead.
Not really, I don't know all that much. I am assuming it is natural gas collected from underground sources of coal and natural gas.
Not really. I don't know much about it at all
Not really. I have not heard anything at all about anyone near where I live that would be considering mining for this.
Not sure - is this the stuff that involves fracking? not keen on that idea at all
not sure how disruptive the process is to the sea bed
Not sure if it is a good alternative
Not sure if it is environmentally friendly
not sure it's a good thing
not sure what it is, but use pipelines to distribute it
Not sure what the environmental implications are in regards to coal seam gas. Think more detailed studies need to be completed before this takes place.
Not too good for the earth!!
Not very good for the environment
Not willing to comment as I know very little and media reporting often reveals bias of individual commentator
Nothing to comment on apart from the 'no coal seam gas' signage across the country side
NSW has agreed to development of coal seam gas, with restrictions Victoria is waiting for more information Some concern about effect on water from the fracturing of seams.
off shore good
Only that Fracking is one of the most idiotic ideas I have heard
Only that it appears to harmful to the environment
only that people are protesting against it about stopping them from going on peoples properties

Only that the unknown is whether the practice would poison the water table.
Only that there is controversy around it, I believe due to environmental effects.
Onshore natural gas exploration has been taking place in Gippsland Victoria for a number of years
Onshore natural gas is both cheap and clean
Onshore Natural Gas is extracted from coal underground. Farmers are becoming concerned what effect this will make on their land, animals, productivity, smell etc. Will it contaminate the land and waterways?
Onshore natural gas is usually extracted from coal seems
Opinions seem to vary widely, but I don't have enough credible information to form my own.
Origin energy a player
overseas information on cause effect of onshore natural gas on communities have given it a bad reputation
potential pollution
Potentially bad for the environment.
pricing is going up by 300% per tear
Probably will end up harming the environment
promising area
prospect for development
Provided it doesn't adversely affect geological makeup and underground water resources the idea appeals.
Provided proper environmental safeguards are adhered to, I have little opposition to the various methods to obtain ONG.
putting pressure into the ground to release the gas
Ruins the water table. Wrecks the countryside. Makes farming unviable. Prices of farms and houses are devalued. Devastates the environment.
Rumours it adversely affects farm land after excavation.
Seems that coal seam gas requires more research before it goes ahead on a large scale - concerns re pollution of groundwater & other environment effects
seems to be getting political mileage but zero engineering comment
Should be available for people that live nearby
Should be banned
Should not be done - environmentally dangerous - dangerous to sea life.
should not be extracting ONG
Simply put; It's bad. It poisons water and destroys the environment
some concerns, based on what I've heard about from the US
some hear but not sure
sounds good to have this natural gas as long as it is environmentally sound
sounds like a good thing
sounds like best way to go.....with proper controls
sounds like its not a very good thing
still don't know much
still not too sure about safety of coal seam gas
Supposedly quite controversial
that ""fracking"" could be dangerous in terms of potential contamination of our ground water
That coal seam gas is causing great concern for residents in the Hunter Valley.
That fracking will pollute aquifers, companies will be able to enter properties without permission of the landowners
That harvesting it could affect the water table.
That it can be located in the Fissures of Coal
That it conflicts with farmers interests
That it destroys aquifers and ruins farmland. I do not want it in my country.

That it is a high risk operation involving dangerous chemicals to flush out the gas from within coal seams. The water also used in these operations can leak into the water table and cause long term ecological damage. This is both bad for the natural
That it is an environmental disaster waiting to happen.
That it is bad.
That it is harder to extract than offshore.
that it is taking up valuable farm lands
That it will be less costly and efficient
That its effect on the environment is not well known. That farmers have little rights when coal seam gas companies make claims etc.
that its going to be a lot more expensive in the future
that onshore gas is better than coal seam gas
that the companies can come onto a farmers land without permission and establish a coal seam gas 'plant'
That there is currently a ban on further development of it.
That water and chemicals are forced into underground gas fields (fracking) to get the gas out. In my opinion based on common sense this is absolutely totally stupid.
The arsenic used in fracking to extract the gas is poisonous and detrimental to the environment
The Coal Seam Gas project will impact of the aqua beneath the ground. The land owners do not have the right to say no to explorers
The community are against it. It will ruin farmland and the surrounding areas
The extraction process seems still to not definitively be seen (or is not) safe in terms of the pollution of the water table adjacent the gas seams!
The fracking could cause issues in areas of the country in terms of increasing risks of hazards such as earthquakes,
The gas is going to be sold overseas which could greatly increase the price in Australia. Big concern.
The idea of mining for natural gas and the environmental Damage it will cause it should be stopped.
The method of extraction is by means of drilling to a required depth and injecting a combination of chemicals under pressure to create an expansion of the various layers of sediment etc. and release the trapped gas to the surface.
The only thing I know is that they drill for it not far out on Bass Strait from Lakes Entrance and Lakes Entrance doesn't have Natural gas...all bottled????What the??
The onshore Natural gas that I know about it pipe in from Bass strait & some well in Western Vic
the opinions I have heard are very much against this, especially fracking for coal seam gas
the way they check for it sucks
There appears to be no middle ground- people are strongly against or strongly in favour. I need to know a lot more before I can make a balanced judgement
There are people who are trying to stop it, but it will become necessary if we are to be able to get reasonably cheap natural gas. There is a fear among some that its extraction will cause damage to the water table.
There has been a lot of discussion about the safety issues involved in gas production
There has been a lot of scare stories about it but I see nothing wrong with it & would be happy to have them drill for it on my property
There has been a lot of talk particularly in the Geelong region about fracking for gas.
There is a big query as to the effects on ground water and the future damage that can be done to our sub-ground.
There is a lot of concern regarding pumping water into the sea up in Queensland. Also contaminating the Murray Darling basin.
there is an increasing dislike to onshore gas & many farmers are against it
There is concern that the systems used to extract the gas may have long term effects on underground water supplies. The quality of and continued supply could be permanently damaged for ever.
there is quite a bit of concern over fracking
there is some dispute on how much it will upset farm land cause problems for the environment
there seem to be some issues regarding fracking

There seems to be a big concern about the impact onshore/coal seam gas will have on the environment.
There seems to be negative views regarding Coal Seam Gas extraction.
There should be more safe guards
There was a big discovery in WA recently
They are buying property along the coast to lay the pipes and residents are not happy
They are thinking of putting a gas plant in the region of the Great Barrier Reef.
they sound good
this programme will focus on receiving feedback and listening issue and concern people and development of natural gas
Too many people are being fed old and outdated info
totally dislike
Understand there is a moratorium on fracking
Unsure whether it will be good or bad overall
Very concerned and against it. A very great risk to water tables and these are extremely important in Australia.
Very concerned with CSG. Specifically water safety issues. Secondary the unfair land acquisition as seen in Queensland by CSG company
Very controversial
Very little but am concerned about our environment
We have enough resources to supply for the next 200 years
We have large reserves we want to capture
Western Australia¡¯s onshore gas resources have the potential to transform the State¡¯s energy industry.
whether it is safe
What I do know, is that I don't want to be a part of generation who feels like mining natural gas. I want to be a part of a generation who uses renewable energy and doesn't support said destruction of the Otway region and furthermore THE WHOLE PLANET.
What it says, Onshore Natural Gas Natural gas coming from land sources
Why aren't we using wind or solar energy?
Will be good for general people at large.
worried about the effect it will have on the water table and stability of the ground
would be in favour of exploration and potential discoveries
would like to know more about fracking on water table and quality
would not like to see it in Victoria
yes I'm not very happy about this method of producing gas
Yes we don't want it
Yes, there are lots of people who oppose it because exploration for natural gas causes a lot of damage to the environment
Yes, I think it is a bad move as there are so many problems that could occur after it is implemented. It is all about greedy large company's not given a damn about the community. They think people are stupid but today's people are very smart and research these things
You can try and disguise it by dressing up the name and referring to Onshore Natural Gas but it is NOT going to make any difference.

Appendix 3.5.
Main reasons for attitudes to onshore natural gas

Appendix 3.5 – Main reasons for attitudes to onshore natural gas

The responses are organised below in order of Would Support, Would not support and Uncertain and Don't know. Some repetitive 'don't know' responses were deleted but the most (around 800) are presented here because of the importance of the content and flavour of the comments.

WOULD SUPPORT
Environmental factor
For the benefit of the environment.
I should support what's right
I think its a environmentally friendly option
if it keeps prices at reasonable levels
Its important that we have gas in our homes, if somehow we are running out of the offshore gas then its viable that we turn to Onshore gas for our needs in the future,
Seems like an efficient source for gas
Additional employment opportunities are excellent for the country.
Alternative energy
Anything that looks after our future
because its natural
Benefit to our economy
better alternative to fossil fuel
competition
Economic benefits and enough gas supply for Victoria.
gas is an important fuel and if there is a way to find more gas for the future then this should be explored
good for environment
I really appreciated the concept
I think it would be good for economy
I want a cleaner healthier environment for my children. I would hope this would help?
I want to avoid high gas prices and would also support new job opportunities
I would need to get more information but I feel that generally it would be beneficial to Victoria.
If it benefits us I'm very interested.
If it's viable and reliable I would support it
if its cheaper , I will support
if its good for our economy
If the use of natural gas is environmentally friendly, then I would love to learn more and support it. I'm all for finding out about options.
If we need it and it creates jobs then that is positive
if it helps the earth why not
increase job availability in VIC
It has great economic benefit to Victoria & its economically sustainable
It seems legit
It will be good for the country.
It will create jobs. If it is worth doing, gas prices might come down because the gas supply is closer to homes rather than out in the ocean.
it would be a lot more eco friendly
its in Australia great for the country
its natural
local produce
may lower prices

May make it cheaper for consumers.
more gas, lower prices
Natural gas has environmental benefits and lower greenhouse gas emissions when used as a fuel in power generation, it has to come from somewhere.
need to see more detail
New gas discoveries I believe would be good for the environment and for the economy
offshore gas supplies won't last for ever
Profits outweigh proper costs and repairs
prospect of more employment opportunities in country areas
resource
Sounds like a good idea
Taken from natural resources
taking advantage of a natural resource
The community needs to have more information about the pluses and minuses re onshore natural gas before they can make an informed decision.
The environmental issues that may arise from fracturing
The federal government won't support renewable energy so I think the only option we have is things like onshore gas production
the likely economic improvement to the Gippsland area and increased job prospects
To keep the cost of gas down
we need energy sources
We need gas and I cannot see the harm in Onshore Natural Gas
We need gas and we need to lower the prices because is growing by the minute and us the poor people have to suffer specially in winter.
we need more gas
we need more resources
we need more resources to meet the ongoing demand so anything we can do would be good
all industry needs to expand
Anything that is safe and feasible to ensure future gas supplies is essential
Anything that's good for the country
anything that create jobs will support
because I am not much familiar about that
because I believe it is a cleaner gas for the environment
Because I think it would be positive for the country.
because it is environmentally friendly
Because of supply, conservation issues and cost.
Benefits to our needs
Cannot rely on off shore gas supplies indefinitely. Either gas supplies completely run out (with inherent problems that would cause) or other sources of gas need to be found. Failing to have alternative energy supplies means we have to continue to lo
cheap available source for coal replacement
cheaper ,should be more economical to produce, saves offshore rigs etc.,
cheaper gas and industry
Clean energy and will keep cost down. much better than fossil fuels
Continual gas supply and hopefully cheaper
Cost effective for the end user
Could save cost as long as it is ok environmentally
Due to the potential cost savings.
economic gains and lower gas bills

Economic value.
Ensure continued supply of mains Gas and possibly create more jobs in Vic and keep price of Gas steady.
we need the energy resource
From what I know it is a safe procedure and one that is necessary for Australia's future gas supplies
Gas is a commodity that will be needed in the future and if we are unable to keep using off shore gas then so be it we must source our supplies on land.
Gas is far more economical than electricity so if we need more to meet demand we may need to get it onshore
gas is the best source of energy
Gas prices are supposed to be going up because of international pricing. If this is the case, we need more exploration.
Given what I have read today it appears to be good for employment the economy and the consumer
GOOD
good & cheaper
Good natural gas at a reasonable price
growing population we need to access more resources
has good effect
HAVE NO PROBLEMS WITH IT
I am sure the safety and pollution factors so far exposed can be satisfactorily dealt with and the economic value to Victoria and Victorians is essential!
I am thinking of the economic benefits to the state of Victoria and possible lower gas prices for consumers if there is an alternative to just offshore gas only
I feel that gas will eventually run out and we need to procure gas from other sources as long as it does not cause any disastrous effect on the environment.
I hope our gas bills get smaller
I just think that if the gas can be safely extracted for use by people like me then it should be seriously considered. I do worry about the impact on farming and the environment but we have to secure gas supplies otherwise the cost of gas will be t
I like to support Australian products.
I think anything natural in our country and as long as it does not poison or pollute or delete our land of important assets go for it.
I think it is good use sustainable natural elements rather than expensive manufactured copies. Also it would provide employment, which is a very big concern at this time. I do think, as it is a naturally occurring product, a substantial percent
I would like to read as much information as I could then make a decision of the best interests in Victoria
IF GOING TO GIVE US A STEADY STREAM OF NATURAL GAS THEN I SEE NO REASON WHY I SHOULD NOT GO A HEAD
if it can improve the economy, create jobs and reduce gas prices it is a good thing and I think it should be looked into
If it Contributes To restricting The Future (and current) cost of usage & connection am all for it, especially if it will reduce the current cost of 'service to household' costs
if it going to help the Victorian economy and create jobs yes why not
If it is a viable option in all aspects including environmental considerations I think it would be of benefit. It would create jobs, create a needed resource. I don't fully understand all considerations but my key concerns would the environmental imp
if it is better prices for the people ok
if it is something important for our energy supply to provide to households than I support it
if it turns out to be economically viable and environmentally safe the job growth would be great
If it's a natural gas, I feel like it might end up better for the environment and earth in the long run
if its good for the economy and helps greenhouse yes
If more Natural gas is produced, households will pay less. We could even export natural gas. More jobs will be created.
If properly researched and implemented, it would be sensible to support
If the process is environmentally sustainable I would support it for economic reasons
if we do not have enough off shore we need to look else where
Increasing source of natural gas at an economical cost. However there would be environmental issues.
It a positive thing for the economy with little downside

it can be positioned further out at sea to not interfere with the beaches
It could increase employment. And it appears that it could be a cheaper way of producing gas
It creates employment, attract/retain energy intensive industries in Victoria with extra jobs, tax receipts, & wealth for Australians & extend Victorian gas & electricity supplies
it does not add to air pollution and reduces our reliance on importing oil
It is a resource that is vital for the future & if deemed safe then we need to extract this valuable resource.
It sounds like a good idea
It will employ people and hopefully, if it is sold on the domestic market, it will bring down household gas prices
It will help ensure gas supplies to the consumer in the future
I don't know about the ' onshore' only natural gas
Looking at the United States as an example it would seem the fears are somewhat overblown and the benefits not quite understood by Australians.
Maybe where we live could get natural gas in the future??? cutting cost and also being better for the environment just from what I've learnt from this survey anyway
Might lower the cost of gas
more natural I think
need for economical supply of gas
need more gas at cheaper prices
Need more information about fracking
Need to use all forms of gas available
new supplies of gas to keep prices down and improve Vic economy
Nothing
Other sources of natural gas diminishing
pricing if cheaper than current system
Proven technology Need cheap gas
resaves are plentiful if handled correctly
should reduce gas prices, beneficial to all
Supplementary source to what is available now
That part about our ‘other’ natural gas prices going through the roof makes me very anxious.
The need for gas supplies. Locally produced.
The need for the product and employment
The world must continue to seek to find additional energy supplies. Renewables have not proven to be cost-effective despite the hyperbole.
There is no sense in denigrating progress
There is obviously a need to replace existent means of energy, and this is one that is readily available although there are obviously some environmental concerns
Think it would help with reducing the onus on coal generated power
this is a type of natural energy
This is because it will save energy and reduce the rising costs of energy consumption in the home. It will help reduce energy bills.
To be able to receive gas at reasonable prices as we now do. Off shore gas won't last forever
To ensure an adequate supply for our needs.
To ensure we can retain the supply of natural gas for domestic use
to keep prices of gas down and to create employment
try to take a balanced view and not be swayed by vocal small bunches of ""greenies""
We have save the environment to reduce the electricity from burning the coal, so we may have to use the gas in the future.
We need an assured supply of gas to the domestic market, and if the industry is established in Victoria, the government may be able to ensure that supplies are available at reasonable prices
we need cheap gas
We need energy sources for heating and cooking. It seems a reasonable idea better than open cut mines for coal.

we need gas and it's best if we don't depend on offshore supplies
WE need more sources of gas, and undoubtedly the industry will get better at the infrastructure concerns around fracking.
We need more supplies
We should be using all natural resources that are available. the alternative is nuclear energy supply which I have grave fears about
we use gas ourselves and as it is cheaper and just an efficient as electricity, we want as much, and as cheaply as it can be provided
We will need more gas for growing population
we will need ongoing supplies of gas
Well it is a natural resource which would help Victoria and maybe bring an income in for Victoria .Has long has all is done openly and properly
Well why not?
yes if it is feasible and Australia gets the bulk of the profit and puts repair plans if place for the land mined

WOULD NOT SUPPORT
Although I have not heard much in detail, most environmental groups seem to be against the process of fracking. Therefore if fracking is involved, I would be unlikely to support due to environmental concerns.
As previously mentioned - Lack of environmental awareness, what are the benefits to us - Victorians/Australians, do not mix the export effect of our current resources as to why we need put our local communities and manufactures at risk
Don't think it's any good
Fracking can be very damaging to the environment, particularly water supplies
I don't believe it to be an environmentally sustainable energy source. It could deplete a lot of natural mineral ores around the country
I have heard a lot about the dangers of fracking and its effects on the environments around it; there have been instances in the US where whole towns have been evacuated because of it and there have been issues in NSW and QLD over it.
it is detrimental to the environment
just doesn't seem fair
not enough is known yet about these new ways of getting gas
The stigma attached to it is too negative and there seems to be a lot of evidence to how bad fracking and gas mining is for the environment.
All the research I've seen particularly in the USA is disgraceful to what it does to the environment and to the water table
As previously stated it is a non-renewable, fossil fuel and I feel that more time and resources should be used finding new and renewable sources of energy.
Bad
bad for land owners and the environment
Because I lack knowledge to offer support currently
because it causes damage to existing infrastructure
Because it may cause sink holes and be a big impact on safety and the environment
Because of the environmental damage that goes hand in hand with onshore natural gas.
Because the whole energy industry is a joke. We should be turning to and investing in renewable energies, not investing more in getting fossil fuels which will run out and then worrying about it once we do. Sustainability should be at the heart of the matter
Chemicals involved and it's damage to the environment. The damage it is causing to the USA environment and their concerns with it also.
danger to water quality
detrimental effects on environment; not enough information about long-term consequences; don't trust the companies promoting it to be fair in their interests
Doesn't appeal to me
Don't like it
due to the issues it has caused in America, however I do not know enough to make an informed decision

Environmental concerns and the risk of contamination to waterways.
Environmental impact too risky with present techniques
Environmental reasons - unsure of how it would affect water table etc. don't believe we need more fossil fuels, should be looking at clean energy.
For all the reasons I ticked in the previous question. Not good for the environment. irreversible
Fracking and the potential for chemicals & pollutants ending up in the water table & air. Unsightly and ability for the gas companies to destroy people's farmland without question.
Fracking has been in the news and it does damage to the water ways and we live in the driest nation on earth.
from the documentaries I've seen it ruins people's lives
I am not sufficiently informed re the process however I think it may cause pollution problems particularly with underground was supply.
I have heard bad reports about fracking, not so much here, but definitely from overseas. I don't think it is the best for our land and environment.
I have no interest
I really would need to know more of the facts. What are the environmental factors? Is this process necessary?
I think that enough damage has been caused to our environment in the never ending search for more profitable energy resources. I think that we should be focussing on conserving energy and finding ways to use less resources rather than focussing on development.
I think the whole process of procuring the gas is dangerous to the environment and I am against it. We can live without onshore natural gas and can use alternative sources of energy. It would be better to ban fracking, maybe search for more undersea
I won't support any fracking under any circumstances. I just think that as long as there is any inherent risk that there could be damage to the environment then it's not worth the risk. We need to improve the technology.
I would not support anything that has a negative impact on the environment
I've heard bad things about ""fracking"" from friends in the UK
I've heard it is very bad for the environment
it sounds bad for the environment
It's a bad thing to do
its not needed
just a feeling that at present the risks outweigh the rewards
Just don't know enough to make an informed decision.
not good
Pollution of the water table & the possibility of negative impact on the food industry.
Possible dangers to the natural environment, farmers rights on their own land
Precious land is disappearing everyday just on housing developments alone. We would be contributing to the destruction of animal habitat and therefore loose our flora and fauna. We need to look at renewable asap for a longer term vision
The damage and instability it causes in the ground. You can't mess with the ground where we live and expect no consequences.
The destruction of natural marine habitats is not worth the risk
The difficulty of extracting onshore gas deposits - it is often bad for the environment, particularly with greenhouse gas emissions - and the dangers of hydraulic fracturing, including leaks and contaminated water.
the effect on the environment & farmers etc.
The environment including animals would suffer terribly. We just can't dig into the earth anymore to suit ourselves and expect no implications. Instead of finding more sources to obtain power, humans need to think about how we can be less self obsess
the environmental impact is far too great to consider it a viable option, to many corporations are concerned more about profit than the environment, the planet and people
The impact that exploration and extraction would have on agricultural land and the farming community, along with the impact on the environment and water quality and volume, both surface and ground water.
The industry presents a biased view. The environmental impact is unknown in the future. Governments are imposing no restrictions to make access available to the companies. Farmers and home owners have no say. Another money grabbing scheme
The risks outweigh the benefit. We should be focused on renewable sources. That's what an ethical, intelligent government would do.
Very concerned about the environment. What are they going to do and how is the question

We should be investing in renewable energy
what it does to the environment
As I answered previously. The use of hundreds of chemicals to obtain the gas.
At this point, I do not know what specific plans might be being considered for Onshore Natural Gas in Victoria, but if it involves fracking, then I would be opposed to it.
Bad for environment
Bad for environment
because it is ruining our shores, our homes, our land
Because it ruins the environment and there are other alternatives that don't, such as solar. No matter what that fat idiot thinks about wind power, he is just as offensive as fracking.
because it threatens our water tables and farming areas, and it only suits the greedy bastards that own shares in these companies
Because of environmental concerns
because of the environmental effect, disturbing the earth so much may lead to further natural disasters like earthquakes etc.
because of the hazards and dangers of it to the environment
Because of the shocking side effects it causes
damage to the environment
destruction of our planet and loss of safe drinking water
disturbance of the natural world, water supply contamination
Do not CURRENTLY know enough to commit
do not think we should carry out at all as no positive environmental side effects and setting up to destroy fragile eco systems
doesn't sound like the technology is safe enough yet
don't like the damage it does when extracting
Don't see why large energy suppliers should be allowed to profit while the long term effects of the coal industry are causing such devastation to the environment. Why aren't we concentrating on solar development?
Don’t tell me we need to frack for gas when we are selling our gas overseas for profit. I hate the feeling of energy companies using excuses such as shortages when there is plenty of gas available without standing over land holders and risking the environment.
environment
Environmental concerns. Taking people's land.
Environmental damage
environmental damage & health risks
environmental vandalism
environmentally unsound
For the concerns of the farming community, and the degradation of the environment
Fracking
fracking causes instability in the Earth's crust... causing tremors/quakes etc. wind and solar options should be looked at
Fracking is an environmental risk. Mining companies are untrustworthy
I am worried about the possible effect on groundwater supplies
I cannot support anything that has not had checks done on every aspect - effect on people's health. Effect on the environment, who will own the gas business (Australian owned only) It must have expert advice
I do NOT like how this causes ill-health, how big companies take over farmers land without permission and how it destroys the environment and water supplies.
I do not want this process to interfere with the water table
I don't know enough about possible benefits
I have environmental concerns about fracking
I still have questions about the safety of our water supplies. I don't really understand how this could be a viable industry without breaking up huge amounts of rock and I wonder about how stable the ground under us might be after such a process.

I suppose that there are dangers to the landscape and the water supplies. Would need a lot of convincing that it was safe and profitable to Australia and that the areas used would not be left unusable after all the gas was used up
I think Australia must move toward fostering renewal energy. It would create new jobs and exports. Gas is not renewable - it is convenient to use and a prospective source of profit for miners. It is not worth the damage to the environment and wellbeing
I think the risks outweigh the benefits
I think we should focus on renewable energy
If it involves pumping chemicals into the ground I will be against it.
If the Offshore Natural gas that is already extracted would be used to supply Australian Industry and Households instead of being sold cheaply to Asian customers, it would not be necessary to convert valuable rural properties into industrial wasteland
Impact on Environment
information provided by state government and lack of technical follow details is alarming
it is bad for the environment and we should be investing in renewable types of energy
It is not environmentally safe besides, when off shore natural gas was first connected to our gas mains the Bolte government told us we would for ever after have a cheap supply of gas for many life times WHAT HAPPENED????????????????
It is not needed when Australia has sufficient gas to export, we in Australia should have the use of OUR gas.
It is too risky nobody really has any idea what the long term environmental impacts will be.
It poses too great a risk to the water tables and environment generally and property owners' rights are seriously compromised by greedy companies that care only about profits and overpaid executives.
it would destroy the environment
Long term effect on farm lands
Mainly environmental. Concerns about the water table, and damage to flora/ fauna
My comments earlier are relevant to this question, The rush to mine this or these gasses is all about the price of gas overseas, as I understand it we have huge gas fields already in Australia
Not enough information
Not enough is known about environmental impact. There needs to be considerable engagement with the likely impacted communities. Laws need to catch-up with this practice to ensure that the coal seam gas companies take full financial and criminal responsibility.
Not enough long term information about repercussions from fracking if used.
Not enough research has been done to clear the way for this type of mining. Typically though God help us if these Liberal Hacks get back in 'cos if they champion the coal industry why wouldn't they go for this crap.
not sure that it is entirely safe, and if we can sell offshore gas for almost nothing overseas, and charge large amounts for local consumption does not seem fair
risks with environmental issues
See earlier comments about the irreversible damage caused to the earth's substructures and underground water aquifers through fracking as well as uncontrolled pollution because of the chemicals used.
see my previous comment
Sounds ugly and detrimental to the environment.
the concept of pumping chemicals into the water table worries me
The fracking process is likely to damage the quality of water beneath the surface. Taking over farmland, including enforcing takeovers. The visual aspect of machinery on the surface. Adding salt water to the surface, damaging topsoils.
the potential damage effects to the environment
The problems and impacts of the process are still very much open to question. Definitely would not want to see in Victoria
The unknown dangers to environment. said to be safe but not a guarantee
The way these companies harvest the product and also sell it overseas without thinking about the Australian market
There are other means of obtaining 'gas' which will not affect the land, i.e. farming, natural environment, etc.
There has been enough damage to the environment already, as for the companies that think of their own bottom line before the environment and the everyday person in the street, will never get my support or nod of approval.
This is a pointless industry which is only somewhat viable in the short term if there is a substantial increase in the cost of gas. Once again Australia follows the US down a dim dark hole instead of looking at best practice in the rest of the world
Threats to the environment and underground water.
Too dangerous for our continued removal from our earth

Too many concerns about its environmental impact. The government should be more willing to have a separate domestic price for gas and reserve a percentage produced for domestic use so that gas prices do not go up as is being planned or allowed. More
Water is too important to risk it for gas.
We have so little arable land in this country. I feel fracking will ruin fresh water quality and change the landscape for the worst
We need to stop putting corporate profits above the safely and conservation of our land. We have seen the long term consequences of ""Fracking"" in the USA. Extracting every possible resource from our earth is no longer the way to go.
Whilst it may help the economy it seems to have some grave impacts on the land and environment from the actual fracking process. It seems excessive when we have a means at the moment.
whilst not a ""greenie" the concerns relating to environmental issues especially the tainting of ground water is a major issue
you have no reasonable way of knowing the damage it will create to our water table
UNDECIDED/DON'T KNOW
bad for environment
negatives and positives make me neutral
no idea
Not enough information public education on process and the effects on the environment.
The price of gas will rise anyway. I am fine with it as long as it doesn't cause any problems with water supplies or the environment
Unsure of the environmental impacts
While I have heard mention of the environmental impacts, I don't yet know enough to make a call one way or the other
ambivalence
because I would be against it if it impacts the environment and the landscape
Depending on the area where they would be considering
Depends mostly if it gets in the drinking water. Also depends on how the land owners are affected.
Depends on where it is located
Do we really have a say!!!
Don't feel informed enough about it all
Don't know enough
don't know enough about its effects
don't know the company
don't really care
don't know enough information yet
eat more beans
environmental
environmental concerns
good
Good & bad points
have not enough info on the pros and cons
haven't been exposed to enough information to decide
I do not have enough information about Onshore Natural Gas in Australia....how it will impact the environment. Where the plants will be built, cost/benefit analysis etc. The other alternative is coal produced gas which is not that attractive either.
I don't know much about it, need to learn more about the pros & cons.
I don't know that much about it. I really don't care very much about the gas industry, I only care about how it will affect me. I don't care about the environment that much.
I don't know much about this subject I would have to be more educated to make e valued opinion
I feel that I would need to research a bit more about the industry to have a proper opinion on whether I support it or not.
I guess that decision is above my opinion
I have heard and seen a lot of damage in the US from sinkholes that are popping up in a number of places. These have been largely attributed to the fracking process.

I think I would need to research more about it before making an informed decision.
I would like to know more information about the process but I am likely to be in favour it is conducted following all recommended processes to maintain environmental security.
I would like to see the environmental impact study first
I would need to look into this further and do more research on the subject matter.
If fracking is required to obtain the gas, I would not support it, however if it is not needed then I might, I would need much more information on the subject before deciding.
I'm highly sceptical about fracking. too much negative press regarding the ill effects of the chemicals used on water supplies & the flow on effect on humans
I'm just unsure
indifferent, don't know enough about it
It would depend where in Victoria who is affected and how as opposed to benefits shown to be a lot more definite
might be good for jobs and economy but bad for the environment
more information - without the spin - of what is proposed... features and benefits
need to find out more for an answer
need to know more details
Need to research more on this area and if I'm more informed than I can make a decision whether to support or not
Need to study options in further detail.
no idea what is onshore natural gas industry
not convinced this is the way to go
Still undecided whether the affect to farmers outweighs the benefits.
There has to be a lot of safe guards to protect people and the environment
We do not know the Onshore Natural gas Industry what benefit will get the Victorians.
When I find more information about it I will decide
Will support on the basis that the price of my utilities don't go up
would need more information
As I previously mentioned I would need to know a lot about the natural gas than I am aware off write now. Its ok to ask me but more information is required
bad
because I don't have enough info to make a decision
Because I feel I still don't know the good or bad impacts it can have on our planet.
Because there is not enough valid information by either parties what the effects will be. e.g. how wills the cost of natural gas will increase if it is not allowed when the costs will increase because the suppliers want it tied to world prices.
Cautious about what ""fracking"" may do to the environment. Unsightly landscape that may arise.
Dependent upon what it will cost the public
Depends how much I believe about the ability to avoid the risks to environment including water supplies
depends on how much gas will go up if we don't do it, but thinking of the environmental issues
Depends on if will be mains connected in my area
Depends on the environmental effects
Depends where they are doing it and the potential risks to people and other industry
don't know enough of both side of the story
Don't know or understand enough about it or where it would be happening. Environmental study results? etc.
don't like the possible problems
Don’t really care about it.
Don't know enough about it yet
don't want it to pollute the environment
Economic benefit but potential environmental risk.
Environmental damage.
Environmental impact especially to those on the land.

Environmental issues are of concern and this has not been fully explained
Everything kills everything and you can't stop progress
Government and interested parties are inclined not to tell the truth, there attitudes absorbed by self-interest. Anecdotal evidence from around the world is cause for alarm. Who do you believe? If in doubt don't do it.
I am concerned about environmental aspects
I am open minded as I don't know enough at the moment. I realise some things are necessary if we want to use gas but would hope the environment is considered carefully
I await the State Government to release a study and their policy.
I bit unsure about its ability
I do not know enough about the entire process, its positive worth and/or the possible detrimental effects to people and the land.
I don't feel I know enough to be able to make an informed decision
I don't know much about it yet to make an informed decision on whether I would support it or not
I have shares in lakes oil
I haven't heard both sides of the story yet
I HAVENT HAD AN OCCASION TO THINK ABOUT IT HASNT BEEN OF IMPORTANCE TO ME
I know little about it
I need to be better informed on ALL aspects of any damage or not to the environment.
I need to know more about the pros and cons before weighing up the decision to support it or not
I need to know more information.
I need to know that pumping xxx into the ground to force out the gas is not going to cause major pollution or other issues
I really do not know if there is any good to using this product
I really don't know enough
I really need to educate myself on the subject before committing my support.
I would like to know more about what it would do the environment i.e. animals, vegetation and pollution.
I would need to know how much it will cost me, and how much it will be exported for.
I would need to know what impact [if any] mining for this gas would cause to wildlife before I decide
I would need to obtain more info to make a better decision
I would require a fair amount of information on which to base my decision.
I would require further education before I could offer a valid opinion.
I would want to know what are the environmental impacts of the industry are in the areas being used to produce gas.
I'm concerned about damage to the environment, contamination of underground aquifers (underground fresh water supplies) from fracking, destruction of farmland
I'm on bottled gas at home. So I don't know much more.
if it included fracking I would have to have more information available to me to be able to make an informed decision
I'm not sure it would be better for Victoria
Insufficient evidence that fracking would be detrimental
environmental
it depends if the benefits outweigh the risks
it depends on how much damage it will do to our environment
It depends where they wanted to do it and whether it would adversely affect people who own and work the land, and wildlife.
It would depend on whether the ""profits"" were actually shared. e.g. taxes to State & Federal Government, fair compensation to affected landholders and local communities. It would also depend on the guarantee given that no damage to underground water
more research necessary on the impact of fracking
my knowledge does not allow me to be one way or the other but I am worried about its effect on the environment
need more information to make an informed decision
Need to know more about the side effects to the environment of this industry
Not fully sure of the environmental impact. Would need to know about other viable options.

Not in favour of fracking, but other forms of extracting natural gas may be more acceptable
not really interested
not sure how they would cope
Not sure if it will be a success
People need to benefit from gas prices, not only overseas countries that already get cheaper gas prices.
unsure about the possible environmental affects and is it the best way to go
Where we live is not connected to gas
Whether or not fracking is required - my concerns are around possible contamination of aquifers and other bi-products of the process and how they may be disposed of. There is also the probability of contamination of arable land and adverse impact farming
Would have to know a lot more about it & the effects it may have on the environment
Would like more information (facts) Without political posturing involved.
Mining if the outcome would NOT affect landowners or the environment. I think that is hardly possible, on land or sea.
A few months ago I read a summary of the arguments for and against in a major daily paper - the 'For' argument seemed to address the concerns of the 'Against'.
All I have heard (although not with any detail) is that 'fracking' is environmentally very bad. I would not be in favour of this method without a lot more information. Other forms may be okay, but again I would want more information on the environment
all other types of retrieving gas without fracking
areas that are being considered for establishing gas plants and the side effects to the water table, farming and native forest areas.
As a Victorian who was told our offshore natural gas supplies were vast and cheap, I, along with most others elected to use gas for domestic cooking and heating. We have now been told that the producers of this gas are able to sell it to international customers
as long as it is environmentally friendly to the local district there is no reason to oppose
As mentioned earlier, I would want to know what effects the fracking would have in relation to our environment and also the follow on effects to the human population. what would be put in place to minimise these issues and possible health risks
As previously stated I feel the supply of gas via ONG methods is vital for Victoria's economic prosperity, provided proper environmental requirements are defined, monitored and adhered to.
Australian owned & used
availability
Bad for the underground earth environment. Bad for the underground water environment. Bad for the above ground environment when the crap used to fracture leaks out. Bad for the above ground water environment when the crap used to fracture leaks out.
Because bottled gas is expensive!
Because Fracking is a completely idiotic idea that only serves money hungry idiots
Because I don't know what the environmental impact will be as have not been advised or shown that it would not have any detrimental effects in the long or short term.
Because I feel it is a cleaner gas
Because I'm not convinced it won't damage the underground water supply
Because it affects the cattle and peoples land
Because it will cause an environmental eye sore to the areas that these facilities will be set up. Also why fund these types of gas sources when renewable energy can be created via wind farms, solar panels, and even tidal generators can reduce our needs.
Because of the fracking. And what I heard or read about what can go wrong (gas coming out of taps, leakage of gas out of the ground and catching fire, destroying water table underground
Because of the need to supply in the future.
because of the negative environmental effects that have happened in Queensland and I don't feel the government bodies are very honest with what information they give to the public so I am very sceptical about the safety precautions that the government can take
because they seem like they are working towards the good of our environment
Because we should not be using carbon-based energy sources at all anyway. Trying to harvest coal-seam and shale gas is about as sensible as trying to harvest the methane produced by cattle and other ruminants
better for everyone in the future

better supply of gas, maybe cheaper gas and better supply
contamination of ground water
cheap
Cheaper fuel.
Chemical leakage into water sources, setting up on people's farming land, no consultation, deals by big companies like Santos with politicians and councils. Barnaby Joyce buying land in Wee Waa area just before Santos went in there.
Coal seam gas (fracking) is not wanted. The companies that want the fracking could not give two hoots about destroying the environment for their own corporate greed and waffle along with the propaganda to con the public into believing fracking is a good thing
Concern about pollution
Concern for environmental damage. we have already done so much damage from ill-considered projects that were done to make money for a few at the future expense of the next generations
Concern for the environment, I don't believe that enough is being done to ensure that the chemicals used are safely disposed of, without the risk of them entering underground water supplies (which are a major source or water for many communities).
Concerns that it may be worse for the planet than current methods
Consequences to the environment. The cost of such a process and Tariff to the client.
cost
Cost of gas supply and if it has the benefits of today's natural gas supplies.
Damage caused to ground and terrestrial water systems
Damage to the environment
Damaging to the environment. I don't believe that a safe and environmentally friendly way to extract gas has been implemented. At this stage I think that the rush to get at these gas reserves, and the financial benefits, have caused crucial process
dangerous to the residents who live near the fracking, and it effects/contaminates the water
Dangers to the environment and water tables
Deliberately fracturing the ground doesn't seem like a good idea to me considering global warming and the increase of natural disasters.
Depending on the effect on the environment, I would be happy to support anything that would lead to cleaner energy use being more affordable and more widely available to users.
Depends on source of information and their credibility in my opinion. I would not trust information from politicians or the industry participants who stood to gain.
Depends on where it is - if it means ongoing employment in our area or not, feasibility, environment etc.
depends on where it is located
Depends on whether it is more environmentally friendly and sustainable for long time
Depends who runs it.
destabilises food security
Do not have enough information to make a definite decision
do not know enough about it to make an informed decision
Do not know enough about the subject to commit to a response at this stage.
Do not know much about it to have a strong opinion either way.
Do not trust fracking and believe the evidence from Qld and overseas. Do not believe that the companies like Lakes Oil will care for the environment, owned by people like Gina Reinhart who cares about nothing for others!
Don't agree with Fracking
don't care
don't know enough about it and it scares me a little
Don't know enough about it to form an opinion one way or another
don't know enough about it to make a definite decision
don't know enough about the advantages or the disadvantages
Don't like fracking, seen too many negative reports about it from overseas. it is not safe or controllable
don't trust the commercial interests pushing it

don't care they rip us citizens off
don't have gas at my home so a little indifferent to it I guess
Don’t really know enough. not interested in using gas
don't stuff up what the future may or may not hold with this process
Due to pollution.
Economic benefits to Victoria are important. If the negatives are so bad surely they would be evident in the USA.
employment
Entering agricultural properties without the owner's permission; risks to already threatened clean water supplies; unknown future risks of fracking;
environment concerns
Environmental concerns with fracking
environmental damage
environment support
Environmental and the cost to supply
environmental benefit
environmental concerns, damage to the water table and so on
environmental factors
environmental issues
Environmental problems it will cause. The prices for gas will go up anyway.
environmental vandalism for the likes of Gina Reinhart
Environmentally gas is better to use for Energy.
Even the layout of the questions in the previous section is evidence for why I am concerned. There are ""lobbyists"" that have raised concerns about fracking, and clear evidence of negative effects (contaminated drinking water). However, in the USA,
Everything I have heard about this industry suggests that the environment is being sacrificed to short-sighted economic interests. The state of government regulations of similar industries does not fill me with confidence.
Excellent concept and very large underground supply, but issues about water pollution are a concern. I dislike the attitudes displayed by lock the gate and some conservation groups who I feel are scaremongering and not well informed!
extreme concern with the damage to water tables and the environment if CSG/fracking goes ahead
Financially benefits Australia.
Fracking - water plus chemicals. What are the chemicals? What rights do the property owners have? What effect on the environment both above and below ground? What soil restitution processes will occur. How long will the mine occur? Burning gas
Fracking has been shown to increase earthquake activity, particularly in Oklahoma. Nature had an article on it.
Fracking is considered by some to be an uncontrolled and uncontrollable system which may interfere with the water table. My main concern is that mining companies cannot give complete answers to the system employed.
fracking is destructive to the environment
fracking is polluting and damaging the natural landscape
Fracking really worries me.
Fracking and mistakes with fracking in the us have led to horrific tales like Gaslands. I do not want that in the Latrobe Valley where we have coal deposits and nearby farmers do not deserve to have their livelihoods snatch from them by an overly greed
From what I have read / heard 'fracking' is not really completely safe
Gas is cheap
gas is cheaper and necessary
Given coal seam gas companies have taken out leases over most of Gippsland, it horrifies me that our way of living, our beautiful environment will be destroyed by this process. I don't want my home price devalued, I don't want my countryside wrecked
GROUND WATER
Have heard the concerns by protesters related to fracking. Naturally these have all been negative. I am not generally in favour of anything that weakens underground stability and might contaminate land or underground water basins. It would depend on

Have little knowledge of the pros and cons re utilising onshore natural gas. Unsure of the vested interests and /or biases in the limited info I have.
Heard to many negative impacts out of the USA stories.and some locals who have no say over their land and where the gas industry can work.
History has shown us it is dangerous, to the people around, the environment, don't we ever learn from the past, SHOOT it is not safe to put holes or disturb our earth in this or any way, and these idiots want to further damage our earth
How can we be assured that fracking will not contaminate our water supplies and destroy vegetation and natural habitats for our native birds and animals
How they abuse people's land
I am 80 years of age in remission with cancer, my wife is 79 and also has a terminal illness, and we are concentrating on living a few more years and not the bickering about what we should do or what we shouldn't do.
I am not at all convinced it is safe to the environment, is not going to deplete our water resources, and is just not an easy option for big business and governments.
I am very concerned about the environmental and health impacts of hydraulic fracturing. I don't trust the government or the businesses involved to put the health of the environment or Australia's citizens and wildlife first and foremost. I believe
I believe in the Lock the Gate movement. No one should have the right to enter someone's property
I Believe so far I have not been shown that the benefits outweigh the risk, clean food and water is more important in the future then short term gains now. As we have been renovating, I have put a lot of thought into our home and the most sustainable options
I believe taking gas from on shore methods could cause problems for the environment on and above ground. If it is done from under the sea it is ok
I believe that I made that quite clear in a previous question. I also don't like deceptive statements and being lied to about ""the need for future gas supplies in Victoria"", or Australia.
I believe that the information put out by the gvt & energy gps & some is media is propaganda as most of the gas that is being processed in other parts of Australia is sent o/s & not used here - so if we need to produce more gas on shore then sell it t
I believe that there are more arguments against, than there are for, onshore natural gas exploration. I believe that the government should make greater investment in alternative sources of natural energy.
I believe there are other alternatives like wind farms and solar
I currently don't know enough about this issue to make a statement of certainty one way or the other
I do not have enough information to make an informed decision
I do not know enough about the impact it would have on the environment and economy
I do not support fracking and the lack of consideration for landholders.
I do not think enough is being done by companies to find other ways or correct problems that have arisen. I do not believe they are totally honest or that the recent progress made with the government completely removes concerns over their practices.
I don't know all the facts yet
I don't know enough about it to have a real opinion yet
I don't like the thought of what damage the fracking could do to our underground environment.
I don't like the use of chemicals to produce this gas as it's known to affect the ground water which will affect us all in the end. There are enough chemicals already in our water & we don't want any more.
I don't really support any industries.
I don't see any reason against it and as we do have an energy shortage this would definitely help
I don't think it is necessary and feel it is not good for the environment and will impact on farmers even if it is not actually done on their land but if a neighbouring farm allow fracking this will possibly affect their farm land
I don't trust the mining industry to do a decent job by the land. They tend to be greedy and careless with other people's health and wellbeing
I don't understand enough about it. From what I have seen in the news it seems to be perceived as a negative thing by locals (protests etc.). However, I haven't heard the other side of the argument therefore cannot make an informed decision at this point
I don't use gas
I don't know enough about the effect on the environment
I feel that we need to diversify our energy needs. Onshore gas is really perpetuating our reliance on a finite resource. Given the right capital support the renewable alternatives are more sustainable in the long term.
I have concerns about the environmental impact of fracking

I have friends who live on farms that are not in favour of it.
I have heard a lot of negative comments, but I do not know whether or not they are true
I have heard bad things from this process from people in USA
I have heard that fracking causes sink holes
I have no problem with establishing another viable source for Natural Gas.
I Have not had enough information to make up my mind yet
I haven't learned enough from both sides of the story. Would need more details.
I just don't know enough about it, but would like a cheaper and more environmentally friendly way to get gas.
I just don't know enough about the process and its impacts either positive or negative to offer an informed opinion
I like to believe the gas industry when they say fracking is safe, but it's safety does concern me, particularly in relation to water and I'd like to know more about the overseas experiences
I live in an area, that is already being warned that subsidence which will increase our flooding risk is likely due to the present offshore gas mining, we're not being kept informed our land values have dropped by 16% due to a flood overlay being in place
I live on a farm and do not support fracking in my area.
I need to know more
I need to read more about what I would be supporting
I own rural property which I farm commercially. I am concerned about the contamination of some forms of On shore Gas extraction that could jeopardise my clean farm meat production
I prefer using gas, and if it doesn't harm the environment and I knew more about it I probably would be happy to support it
I presume if natural gas was found in Victoria it could lower the end price
I really don't know anything about onshore natural gas so would have to investigate this further
I still believe fracking is bad
I think anything that could benefit the environment is worth at least looking into.
I think I explained this in the previous text box. I don't want to be responsible for xxxxing up the earth for the sake of a bit of gas which is not a renewable resource. No one actually needs gas due to electricity.
I think I heard good things
I think it will be cheaper
I think it would get into our water supplies with the tracking and also make the land unstable.
I think we would be better off using renewable energy like solar than investing more in the gas industry.
I understand that fracking can cause an increase in natural disasters such as earthquakes. I also feel that we have already caused enough damage to this planet without adding to it. we have a duty to protect what has not already been destroyed
I understand that it is a cheap supply to Gas resources but have concerns about the environment and safety of the process and some information I heard about these extraction plants being able to pop up on private property without the owners approval
I would be concerned about the negative environmental impact (it sounds like a very aggressive means of establishing energy which could more passively be obtained via wind, water or solar methods).
I would have to be convinced that there would be no damage to the environment, including the groundwater, from whatever technique was used to extract the gas. I would not support fracking as I am aware it has great risks to the environment
I would have to find out more to form an opinion
I would have to know a lot more about the process and how it affects the environment and property owners. I have seen reports that state that the surrounding land can be affected in a negative way by the process. I also do not like land being compulsorily acquired.
I would need to know more about environmental concerns verses benefits of obtaining gas using these processes.
I would need to know more. last I heard Fracking is rarely economically sound in the long term
I would need to know much more about the industry preferably from independent sources
I would need to research the issue a lot more before I has a strong opinion either way
I would need to understand more
I would not like to see Onshore Natural Gas have any effects on farming productivity as this is a way of life and production for everyone. If it can be done it would produce a great source of income for Australia and benefit everyone.
I would NOT support fracking, simple drilling may be acceptable but only if we keep our resources NOT sell them off to other countries. Would prefer we investigate methane production we certainly have plenty of the raw materials required.

I would prefer to see renewable energy sources developed instead of reliance on fossil fuels. Solar and wind technology are increasingly viable alternatives, with much lower environmental impact.
I would support it if it was a good option for the environment and people.
I would want to know more about it, would also depend on where I am living and whether I can obtain natural gas or not.
I'd like to see more information specific to the location and an environmental impact statement.
I'm anxious about the long term effects of fracking on the environment over the longer term.
I'm not interested
If it decreased the price Victorians now pay for gas, it would be advantageous for all Victorians. It would also have the ability to make money for the Victorian Govt if it sold any excess to overseas countries.
If it helps the unemployment levels in regional Victoria I may be more inclined to support it. Not sure about this fracking business though. It has had a lot of bad publicity.
If it involves fracking I would not support it
if it supplies cheaper gas
If it's gonna keep the gas price down & good for our economy
if there is natural gas available, then it should be go ahead but need to ensure minimized the bad impact to the environment and people
If you don't do the research you are liable to run out of gas
I'm not sure if it would be expensive
impact on the environment not well established
indicated reasons in a previous question
Investment should be made into environmentally friendly power, like solar and wind, rather than gas.
it depends if it is needed
It depends on the extraction methods used.
It depends on the process undertaken and the type of extraction used to access the gas.
It depends on what will happen to surrounding areas and if it is safe.
It does too much damage to the environment, it is the big gas companies trying to tell everyone we need it so they can make a lot of money from it , there are better forms of environmentally friendly and sustainable renewable sources of energy
It is being considered in an area not far from my home and my understanding is that it will greatly adversely affect the local waterways. Happy for it to occur in the middle of Australia, away from population centres
IT IS ENVIRONMENTALLY DANGEROUS, HARMFUL AND UNNECESSARY IN THIS MODERN AGE WHEN WE HAVE OTHER WAYS (THAT ARE CURRENTLY SURPRESSED AND HIDDEN FROM THE PUBLIC) TO PRODUCE ENERGY THAT DOES NOT INVOLVE DEPLETING ANY NATURAL RESOURCES.
It is necessary to find other sources of natural gas other than offshore. It has proven to be viable in other areas of Australia. If proven safe environmentally in Victoria, I think it is a great idea.
It means we get cheaper gas and it doesn't affect the environment
It might make our bills cheaper.
It seems cheaper to be able to make and produce our own gas rather than importing it from other countries, money could be spent better elsewhere.
it seems like a good idea
It totally depends on availability to my property and costs.
it will hurt the environment and only benefit the gas companies
It would appear that it takes over land uses it and then returns it to the owner with little compensation
It would be good for the environment
it would be good for Victoria creating jobs
It would create more jobs in Victoria, the price of natural gas shouldn't go up.
It would depend on how if effects Victorians and myself
It would depend on the environmental factors
it would affect the water table
it would ruin the environment
It's progress

it’s a natural gas good for the environment
its natural, must be better for the environment
It’s not safe. It will cause many healthcare problems, including death in both workers and surrounding communities. Tainted water supplies, loud round the clock non stop noise creating sleep deprivation, which in turn causes drowsiness
Just coz I am not sure how feasible this source of gas is
just do
Lack of current knowledge, unsure about where the facility will be, don't know the processes being used, or the environmental concerns
like
Likely to support if it is a cheaper way of obtaining natural gas
looks like the way to go
More cost efficient passing on savings to consumers
More employment, attempting to keep prices of natural down,
My answer might change if I knew more about what is involved
My preference in the home is electricity and I am not fond of using gas in any form.
Natural and won't harm the environment
Natural Gas is not a growth industry. Global investment is moving away from Fossil Fuel Investment at an increasing rate. It is also a Toxic process that Does No need to happen at all. Transition away from Natural Gas is required.
Need a lot more science and survey and safety info before I would commit...I am a retired forensic toxicologist and could well examine such info.
Need for other energy forms and also local industry development
Need more information to convince me it is environmentally friendly
need the gas
need the gas and employment opportunities it would create
Need to know a lot more about the industry and how this industry will impact on farmers and the environment.
No one really knows what damage it will leave. The farmer dos not benefit and it leaves his ground unusable. USA farmers are lobbying against it and are trying to convince Australian farmers not to allow it.
No sure of the impact it would have with the environment and the cost to the user
not enough is known about the environmental damage that fracking could do
not entirely sure of safety to the environment and the residential
Not good for land owners
Not sure of the environmental consequences. Would need more information
not sure of the side effects to this process
not too sure about safety and the environmental impact
On shore conventional natural gas seems OK but the methods of extraction from coal seams and shale concern me as stated previously. So I would probably support conventional on shore gas wells but would need a lot more information about any other
Other states are collecting and by the time Vic does mine, we will probably have better practises.
Our water and agricultural resources are more important and alternative renewable energy sources can be developed easily
possible environmental repercussions
prefer renewable energy
risk to the environment
Risks to environment and water supply
See previous comments. From what I gather this industry has lowered gas prices in other countries and boosted the economies of States/Governments where the industry is operating
Seems like a reasonable energy source/resource for Australia.
Sooner or later present supplies will run out and ONG alternatives are better than nothing. However, let’s all go solar and wind.....
sounds good and useful
sounds good to me, we need to do more for our energy
Sounds like it would bring more jobs to Australia.

Still don't have a great understanding therefore cannot make an informed decision
Still need to knows more about the effects of it
Still unclear as to the possible adverse environmental effects
Support would depend on what credible and unambiguous information was forthcoming from both the government and especially the companies involved in the process.
The ability for gas companies to take over farming land and the likelihood of pollution of underground water supplies.
The additional things I would want to know before making up my mind would be: (1) industry safety (especially considering recent mine fires), (2) environmental impact, (3) whether it will it make gas cheaper for us Australians
the climate must keep us alive for the future we need to look after it more
The cost involved. Off shore is already up and running.
The damage to the environment, especially to our precious water supply. Saving or making money is not as important as saving our natural water source.
The harm to the environment. We already pay export prices for our own natural gas, when other countries who have natural allow the residents to purchase it at a cheaper price than the export one, so why would we want to put more money into greedy c….
The impact on the environment in Victoria is bad enough without any more polluting and destruction. Every time there is drilling fracturing blasting the environment and we as resident and the wildlife all suffer for it.
The environment
The irreversible risks to the environment, these have been made clear by both scientists and existing cases in Australia and the USA. The clear lobbying of companies, donations to government and attempted legal challenges to create this industry
The large supply is a benefit for reducing cost and operating everyday
The long term environmental and health risks outweigh any economic advantage. There are alternatives. We need to switch from energy supplies like gas, oil and coal to environmentally sustainable, responsible sources such as wind, solar etc.
The long term environmental effects sounds bad
The method of Fracking is dangerous to our underground water supply. They say it's not and will all be enclosed but it only takes one accident and our water supply would be contaminated for years and years.
The outright greed of energy producers and suppliers riding roughshod over aussie land owners and farmers trying to make a living whilst big business gets richer. They should be thinking forward to when they've raped everything from planet earth.
The possible damage it could cause, finding the gas and the use of fracking. No one has told me whether the benefits would outweigh the 'costs', environmental and other.
The real lack of knowledge about on shore gas, I couldn't make an informed decision as yet
The wildlife was here before our need and greed. China pays a lot less for our gas than what we do, so I do not want our environment damaged for overseas and greed. We have to look after our own country first.
There are many people in Australia now, in some years time we are likely to start running out of gas. I think that we will have to look at the possibilities of drilling for more gas. Or rather going through the process of refining the gas that is there
there are no study to show it is safe
There has so much debate about the contamination of subterranean water reserves which are so important for our environment & the damage that can be caused to surrounding farm lands, it makes it extremely questionable that extracting gas in this manner
There is an increased need for energy.
There needs to be a lot more study into what's happening in America and other countries. Environmental impact and threats to public safety far outweigh the potential economic benefits to the state/country.
They may want to use my land
this gas should stay where it is
this would give greater access to natural gas for all people, cheaper supplier also
to ensure a better supply
To help employment and have industry growth in our country
To help keep prices down.
Too problematic if fracking is involved
uncertainty
Unnecessary in a country that has huge potential in renewables
Unsure of all the details as yet.

Unsure of the impact of fracking
Water quality, fracking fallout damage, land acquisition unfairness, general environmental concerns.
We are farmers and see the industry set to invade our land and livelihood as well as the strong possibility of damage to the environment
we don't need it - and it will ruin the farmer's livelihood
We have no access to natural gas in our area and I'm not sure what effects on shore would have on the environment.
We might lose our fuel from coal so a backup fuel is not a bad plan.
We need a gas supply
we need gas supplies into the future
We need more industry in Victoria
we need more jobs for people
we should be looking at wind farms, etc. - not our natural resources which will run out
Will open doors for employment
Worried about rise in cost and where it comes from really!!
Worries about the environment and the costs to consumers
Would depend on method of extraction proposed
Would like to know a bit more from both sides of the coin.
Would need to be better informed before I made a decision
Would need to get unbiased info about its environmental effects
You cannot just lump All ONG together. Whilst I may support certain parts of the industry, Not all part will be supported until adequate and appropriate independent research is conducted on each and every site

Appendix 6. Suggestions for the Government

Appendix 3.6 – Suggestions for the Government

Q63 What do you think is the main thing a State government should do about an Onshore Natural Gas industry if it is feasible in Victoria?

WOULD SUPPORT
Regulate it
Investigate it thoroughly to see if it's viable or feasible in Victoria and then allow it to go ahead with rigid regulations put in place.
Keep it safe
make sure its safe and doesn't impact the environment
receive the tax for the contribution
Compensate Farmers, and have strict rules and regulations in place beforehand
costing
Discuss concerns with scientists and be open about any negative impacts.
Do extensive risk analysis by involving scientists and all the stakeholders including farmers and local communities and come up with strong control measures to setup this industry in the country.
do it
educate Victorians about it
ensure it is safe and wont contaminate people/water/land and monitor this as an ongoing thing
Ensure it's safe and that there are benefits for everyone
ensure that it is not going to have a negative impact on the area in which they decide to locate it
Ensure that it is safe and does not irreparably damage the environment
Ensure the safety of the gas extraction process and delivery. Control the gas industry not to contaminate or minimise the effect to the water, environment and agriculture.
Environmental study
get started
Go ahead with its implementation
Have it available to all who want it
I think they should do proper research instead of thinking of just their pockets!
keep prices low ,
make sure everything is safe
Make sure it is rules and guidelines in place.
make sure it is safe
Make sure it's run properly and effective with minimal impact on the surrounding environment.
Make sure people in the affected communities get adequate compensation!
Make sure that everyone in the state understands the pros and cons of retrieving gas in this way, today is the first time I have ever heard of these issues. Where there are profits to be made there is also corruption so the government would have to be involved.
more awareness to people, its benefits
Not sure what to say because I am not very familiar with it, Government should do the vest for Australia and community.
Pay everyone who lives nearby to move somewhere else
Proper due diligence
Provide business solutions based on scientists advice
Reduce the cost of gas
regulate the industry
research and plan before acting
research it thoroughly
save future
Sell the idea and consult the communities.

Someone to oversee everything to make sure no one gets hurt in the implementation and make sure it is safe and something needed for the future
Start from the less inhabited areas first
support it
Take advantage of the great opportunities
That majority of Victoria wants it to happen.
The government should provide enough and sufficient information so that people are aware what natural has entails and how it can benefit or not benefit.
the maintain the future of all Victorians
The state government would need to ensure that there were adequate regulations and protection legislated to ensure that local communities and the farming community aren't forced to accept conditions that are favorable to big industry only.
View the cons and pros of having it
Ensure strict controls, include extreme penalties for any deviation from legislation.
Advertise that it is much cheaper than Offshore gas to harvest & begin tapping into the gas.
Allow it to go ahead
Be cost effective. Health and safety. Make sure the environment does not suffer. Make sure pricing is fair. The government should be in control and not let outside investors have the majority of shares in the gas production and selling to the public
Be sure the benefits are shared by Victorians both in the area of the fields and state-wide via lower gas prices.
Check out all aspects, see what other countries have found out and weigh up all the answers
Conduct a thorough investigation as to its impact on the local community and to have community feedback
Consider any wildlife and health risks. just like they had to consider where to put the desalination plant
Continue to research the ""concerns"" some people have against the process to put minds at rest
control it
develop it
do a full and comprehensive feasibility study before it makes a decision
Do it
Educate the community more and in terms that make sense and are relevant. Clearly outline the pros and cons and what the government will do to minimise environmental impact.
Educate the public about its benefits and demonstrate that it is not damaging to the environment in any way
encourage development
Ensure it is an industry that benefits all Victorians and not just politicians and mining company owners And put health and safety first in all aspects.
ensure its safety
ensure operators are reputable and experienced
Ensure plenty of consultation from all Victorians, not just lobby groups. Perhaps provide enough detailed, non emotional information to ensure that a referendum would be practical
Ensure safety and that the greenie alarmists are kept out
Ensure safety of aquifers
ensure that is it safe and if it is ensure that it is available to all
Ensure that it is environmentally as safe as it can be, ensure that business does not have to handle too much red tape, keep the unions out of it, look after the people and create jobs and keep them in Victoria, including call centres or whatever else.
Ensure that it is not a health risk to anyone, and that anyone disadvantaged by the development of the industry is well compensated
Ensure that the farmers are not adversely affected.
Ensure that the project goes ahead and if it does have a detrimental effect on a few they can be compensated accordingly the alternative of nuclear energy is not acceptable.
Ensure the whole community will benefit financially and that the damage done to the land is as little as possible
Ensure everything is done properly and controlled, and not a waste of tax payers funds like the desal. plant
Environmental issues

Establish a regulatory body, ensure landowners are appropriately compensated, legislate
Explore it. if it doesn't work fine, but maybe they need to try and see
follow expert advice
frame strong legislation
Fund it
get on with it asap
Get scientific evidence of the process in obtaining the gas. Weigh up all the pros and cons. Work out the costs.
go ahead
Go ahead with it.
GOOD
government should promote them and help to make possible in Victoria
Govt should undertake a feasibility study to establish the possibility of gas exploration, a scientific study to study the benefits vs risks by such an exploration. Govt should call for proposals from companies.
I don't really know much about this
I'm not sure as I don't know enough about the industry
If it is feasible in Victoria, Government should work closely with scientists, and the local community
If satisfied that it is a safe industry they should allow it
if we all get a quid out of it
increase its use
inform and educate communities about pros and cons and gauge community response before proceeding
Introduce it, to make more jobs.
listen to the scientists and engineers, not the commercial administrators
It is very important for them to supervise the operation of the industry.
keep out - let the industry develop without red tape
Keep the public informed with any changes that may or may not be happening, but keep the information simple and un-repetitive.
legislate and regulate conditions of accessing the gas
LESS FED TAPE
Limit the free for all exploration across properties
make it a viable concern
make it very affordable
MAKE SURE ALL PEOPLE AFFECTED ARE WELL LOOKED AFTER
make sure consumer prices are low
Make sure it has a lot of communication with the surrounding area so it is able to explain why this is good for the region, Victoria and growth in Australia, make sure it can back up their explanations with facts and be open and honest.
make sure it is controlled properly
Make sure it is done properly with more than one opinion and get as much information as possible before commencing and keeping the community informed .No lies
Make sure it is safe for everyone concerned
make sure it is well controlled and take the politics out of the equation
Make sure local communities benefit from this, make sure local labour is used, take all precautions for the safe extraction of gas, perhaps closer towns to the extraction point have supply at a reduced cost.
Make sure people are properly informed about in shore gas. Regulations and scientific surveys adequately implemented.
Make sure that everyone within the community knows what the industry entitles and are briefed on all information throughout the process
Make sure that everything is as transparent as possible especially in rural farming areas like where I live. I wouldn't want to see anyone forced off a farm etc. I think the state government should offer compensation to people who may lose land/far
Make sure that the land owners are given a full consultation and compensation rights before the mining companies are allowed to enter their land. No one should be forced to allow activities they object to being carried out on their land.

Make sure that there are benefits for communities and price reductions for household gas
make sure the project is run properly
Make sure there are no health hazards
make sure they employ good gas people to do the job
Minimum regulation to ensure safe operation of any site only. Too many regulations only tend to force higher cost to the consumer.
NEED TO CHECK IT OUT.
open forum voting to public
open public discussions get scientific evidence to prove or disprove the total sum of benefits
Pass amendment to the present laws relating to gas to ensure the safety of the people
Promote it, encourage through tax incentives, simple & clear regulations, compensation to affected land owners
Protect communities and the environment
Put in place strict, science-driven safeguards against water and other pollution, but in all other ways it should make it easy for companies to invest in this industry, and encourage them as far as possible to do so.
Regulate the access to operations. Make sure the landowners are reasonably compensated for any losses to land area. Make sure operators restore the land to what it was after operations are completed.
Regulate the Industry
regulation and ensure it is sustainable for all other industries
research thoroughly
Review overseas operations and then formulate regulations after consultation with the companies, land owners and others who wish to contribute to the outcome. Then place a draft of the intended legislation on a public website for information and further discussion.
save life
set proper controls
Set regulations to allow prompt start
Speed up the processes, cut red tape
strict environmental control
strict regulations concerning the environment, landscaping and to make sure the correct companies are chosen
Study other countries to gain further information on risks and other issues associated with this type of gas works
Support it its introduction strongly
Take full control
Take Steps To Ensure That The Process Can Be, And Is Able To Be, Monitored By The Government During The Impact Studies & The Actual Process of Extracting & Storing The Gas, At All Times
Talk to the people so we know all the good and the bad.
The main concern I believe is with the farmers. As long as they are compensated and looked after properly this should not be much of an issue.
They should implement the system in a tasteful manner that does look like the contraption will pollute the environment.
they should make it okay
To ensure safety of the environment and no effect on agricultural land and underground water
To ensure that it is feasible & that no landholders are disadvantaged, but we need to develop new industries to help with sustainability.
to find out what natural gas resources exist within the coal seams ASAP for our future benefits
to regulate and continually check its operations and how it effects the local community
use it
WOULD NOT SUPPORT
Check if it will damage land and environment
don't have much of a say as I don't understand enough to comment
Impose limits as to where they can excavate land. and what guidelines to follow to strictly preserve the environment
Invest in clean energy industries instead, where the economic benefits are matched and environmental impact is lessened.

keep it highly regulated and provide strict guidelines for appropriate operations
Make sure farmers and others near where this would occur are compensated in any way that is needed
more research needed
Regulation.
They shouldn't make it happen
Wait and see what happens over a long period. We need to focus on what is best for us as Victorians and then Australians. If our domestic requirements are at risk then I understand the need to look for new supply. If however this is being driven by t
avoid it at all cost
ban it
BAN IT!
Ban it!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
cash in and share the profits correctly
Consult with experts in the field
Do a complete investigation on what effect it would have on Victoria's waterways and give honest clear feedback to Victorians.
Do not do it
Do not let it go ahead!
Ensure farmers have a say in what operations are performed on their land and any compensation related to land use is provided
ensure that all rules and regulations are followed
Ensure that it is safe for the community in which it is located
Ensure that onshore mining is not forced on communities
ensure there is no impact to the environment, wildlife and landowner a
Extensive LOCAL feasibility study - needs to focus on VICTORIAN environmental factors, not those used in other world areas
Fracking is like putting you daughter into prostitution because it brings money to the family, regardless of the costs. Your can't trust a government to do the right thing for the people, when all politicians are on the take.
I believe that this is a band aid for our much larger and permanent problem and therefore they need to be looking into renewable energy
I have no idea...!
If it is feasible it should then be regulated stringently so as nothing can go wrong with the water supply even though I disagree with this option.
Ignore it and build solar panels and wind farms
Leave it in the ground
Listen to the scientists about environmental costs
Look at investing in other environmentally friendly options instead of looking at these options
Make all possible information and outcomes available to the public.
make sure it is totally safe for the community and water
make sure it’s completely safe for the community and that it does not impact on the environment
make sure its safe
Make sure that controls are tight and policed so as to ensure that the livelihood of farmers and farming communities are not affected into the future. we all have to eat so we need to land for food production more than we need the gas
Monitor it
Not allow it. The long term environmental health of our country is more important than any short term financial gains.
Not let it in to the State
Not to implement fracking. Any major decisions should be based on a referendum by the people not by a few politicians with vested interests and financial benefits.
Nothing-they should make sure it doesn't happen
Nothing. It is better to be safe than sorry. The land is meant to last for future generations there is no guarantee that it can safely keep it this way no matter what government does or says.
police it to be sure they do it safely

Prevent it in the first place. Invest in solar and wind.
Price reduction in gas for everyone, the retailers cost always exceed the actual usage Not right
Proceed very carefully
Reconsider. No point screwing it up, as has happened in some parts of the U.S. for instance, and then try to fix it up afterwards.
Reject it
Should be looking at alternatives to all energy and invest in nuclear power, renewable energy etc. Australia is the most stable country for this. Instead of destroying the landscape they should be looking at other alternatives.
Show more of a concern towards the environment than corporations and their own profits, the little man is never considered when it comes to corporations raping our land for profit
Stay away from fracking in any form and make the gas companies improve the technology
Stop it and focus on other industries which promote sustainability for their community. Consult with the community. Stop telling people what they want and start asking them.
They would need to regulate the locations to avoid damage to tourism and agriculture. They would need to put in strong laws and penalties for environmental damage, including cleaning up after a company closes a gas extraction.
abandon the idea
Abide by the will of the people, and not the mining corporations.
Any Government should preserve the value of rural land & make sure that the offshore gas is not squandered at the behest of powerful lobby groups
Assess the long term impacts
at the slightest sign of damage to the surrounding area ,both above and below ground should be made to cease immediately
Ban any onshore natural gas mining. Put resources into renewable energy.
BAN IT.
ban use of toxic chemicals in fracking
Check out all legislation in other parts of the world that monitor and oversee these developments, and see whether these laws have resulted in a law-abiding, non-destructive industry that does not just pander to its shareholders.
Conduct a comprehensive investigation with results made public, then perhaps a referendum.
Consult with potentially impacted communities and see if they support it.
Control it
Do extensive tests to ensure that there will be no negative environmental impacts.
do not allow it to proceed
Do nothing until its effects can be seen and studied in other areas where the govt rushed into a decision to allow fracking. And the area's rehabilitation. There is no hurry. Gas will still be there
Don't do it
Don't let it happen.
Education to communities needs to be a priority, including realistic benefits and risks. All work done must be viable and supported by scientific facts.
Ensure it is safe
ensure solid scientific advice is followed re the environmental aspects
Ensure that it doesn't cause any damage to the environment or water supplies
ensure that the environment is fully protected to guarantee no adverse impacts occur which would affect quality of life for all
Find some responsible people be they scientists etc. to monitor the dangers to the environment. There are lots of these people around since Team Abbott sacked them all and the State Govt could snap them up.
Forget about the tax they will get from the process.
get independent scientific analysis
Give us guaranteed cheaper gas without any damage to the environment
Have extremely strong regulations regarding environmental damage and replacing plants, etc., when they move on
Have total control of ONG activities by strict regulation to protect the interests of ordinary people and NOT be kowtowing to the interests of what will probably be multi-national conglomerates. In this case the interests of the environment, clean water…

have total control, and impose any and all protections to keep the water supply totally safe, ensure the land is protected, farm land should not be used in any circumstance, and the environment protected from any risk no matter how small
Highly regulate it and tax the companies involved
I do not trust liberals in state or federal with anything. We don't even have a science minister..yet your questions are based on science
I don't know enough to comment at this point
If it involved fracking, then the State government should not allow this kind of development. If there were other methods of extraction, then I cannot have an opinion until I know what is proposed.
Introduce and enforce laws banning it
Investigate thoroughly before commencing proceeding. The environment and health of locals is paramount
Make absolutely certain it does not damage farm land, the environment and the people living near the sight. It must be watched closely for any damage occurring - or potential damage. These companies are out to make money at the expense of their people
make sure nothing is damaged
Make sure that any company producing Onshore Gas is held fully responsible for any degradation to the water quality in the area, or any other environmental damage that is proven to be from their operations. not just in the immediate future
Make sure the environment is not affected and land owners are properly compensated.
Make sure the people of Victoria benefit financially, so we still have something to live on when it is all gone!!
More consultation. More scientific research More say by landowners more openness
Must be highly regulated and take into account community views
Not do it, or if it goes ahead tax the companies 90% like in Norway
not feasible if wanted to maintain a safe environment in particular safe water which is sacrosanct
Not force land owners to give up their land for this industry. Make sure that they control these companies with guidelines of how to go about not destroying the land or water. Pass a law to protect people and their property
Outlaw the practice, and move toward renewables rather than the destruction of the environment for a short-term financial gain. But given the current practice of selling assets, I wouldn't put it past Napthine to sell the entire state to gas production.
Prevent this unmitigated disaster from occurring. Do not fold to cash and pressure from the industry lobby groups.
Protect the people and environment at all times with very strict rules and regulations. Heavy penalties for breaking the rules
Put a stop to it. Tell them they are not welcome here to do business.
Put it to the voters - not just listen to the large corporations (both overseas and within Australia)
Refuse to allow it to proceed, and legislate to stop it....
Refuse to permit any on-shore Industry. An Off-shore industry is the only accepted alternative.
Reject it.
Research and investigate the effects of Onshore Natural Gas on the environment and community in a scientific and unbiased way. They need to do this without the influence or lobbying of companies or any stakeholders that want to promote this form of
Set Laws forbidding about letting Onshore Natural Gas have any availability to any natural gas in Victoria. They will eventually end up causing more damage to the state land and ruin the environment. In other words tell them to get lost.
should not think about it - we should be using natural energy - wind and water and solar
speak to the people of Victoria and discuss the wrongs and the rights and see if they can come to an alternative
State government should stop it going ahead
Stop it. Use equivalent government financing to build better, more appropriate solar/wind technologies.
Strictly control environmental impact
Strong regulation And penalties
That it is perfectly safe for the environment, both short term and long term, and that the gas company owners don't make exorbitant profits at the expense of the consumers.
The trouble is you can get a report to say whatever you want the outcome to be, so companies can tell the government anything they want. We all know the state government in Victoria is useless and more than likely be voted out next term, the incoming
They should just stop it because it shouldn't happen.
Thorough research by all concerned factions

undertake scientific studies into long term effect on agricultural land look at other cleaner and tested energy solutions
UNCERTAIN/DON'T KNOW
ensure it is obtained with little destruction to the habitat and wildlife in the area
Ensure profits and benefits go to the community at large, not just the gas industry
Ensure that environmental risks are addressed
highly regulate and monitor it
If there is any possibility of contamination of water supplies or environment then they should not allow it to proceed
make people aware
regulate and advise the community involved in the area
run and control it
to increase investment but maintain environment safety
What benefits the society most?
Allow the community to educate themselves and then vote for what is right for Victoria.
always consult farmers on the land first
as indicated in many previous questions I know nothing about the onshore natural gas
be fair and ensure customers aren't ripped off
better greening
conduct a cost-benefit analysis
Conduct studies around environmental and local economic impacts and act on recommendations.
Consider everything carefully, including environmental impact and the health of people living in the area as a priority. The government should be completely transparent about any issues and ensure the safety of people and wildlife at all times.
consult the public
Creating awareness about risk and benefits so that community is well aware.
do it in the best way possible
do more studies, more scientific research and info
economy benefits
Educate - Regulate and DONT postulate... Make all information and processes open and transparent
Educate the citizens of Victoria a bit more about the industry so we know what is happening.
ensure environmental protection and local stakeholder adequate compensation
ensure it is safe and meets community expectations
Ensure it is safe to people and the environment
Ensure it is safe, compensate anyone affected by this process, monitor its value to people,
Ensure safety of the environment (water tables, health of land after use etc.)
Ensure that it is not harmful to humanity or the environment
Ensure the health of the local community is not affective in an adverse way, ensure scientific oversight of exactly what goes on. DO NOT trust big business.
Explore all benefits outweigh any possible risk
Gather all relevant information and consult with affected communities
Health and safety to the community
I apologise for being so negative about this but I honestly cannot give a proper opinion about something I know nothing about.
Inform and educate the public about it all and ensure that strict guidelines are in place to control any dangers to the environment
It is as long as the onshore natural gas industry gets the local support and information about the process and not detail dangers that might come along.
It needs to be very carefully considered from an environmental, community, health, safety, commercial, and agricultural aspects need to be thoroughly checked both scientifically, economically.
It should consult people in the industry to see if it is a real possibility for Victoria
it would create more jobs

Just monitor and put strict conditions in place
keep people informed
let all the people know about it
Listen to the people.
look after the rights of people in Victoria and ensure that farmers do not have their land destroyed or used without their permission and are compensated fairly
make it competitive
make sure environment is protected and all liability is taken on by the gas companies
Make sure it's regulated and not harming anyone or the environment
Make sure that it is right for the Australian people and economy
Make sure that it's safe and there are certain regulations that are strictly followed.
Make sure that there is no long-term effects
Making it work for everyone
More thorough investigation into the potential negative effects
not sure
price
regulate it and bring our prices down
regulate it and ensure that Australia retains the profits and forces the companies responsible to pay for rehabilitating the land when they are finished
regulation of the industry to comply with the law to ensure that all parties involved will be protected
Safe to the environment and ensure the price of utilities don't rise
safety to the environment
somewhat feasible
Standardise the extraction processes
Strict regulations & make sure it's safe for the people around the area.
strong regulations for companies involved in its development
Support it, IF it’s safe to do so.
that it is a safe process & doesn't harm the environment
The prevention of disruption to land owners and tenants of proprieties, full payment of use of their land and re-building the damage after fracturing.
The protection of Safety to the people and environment
They can go through all the positive & negative impacts on Victorians The Benefits of the Onshore Natural Gas industries
They should ensure that there are totally independent experts who monitor all aspects of the environment to ensure that there are no negative impacts from this process. They should have the power to halt any processes should something be amiss.
They should firstly ensure that all communities and individuals are well learned about the processes and impacts that the process may present as well as opportunities, negatives and positives. They also need to ensure that the process is safe
To do scientific evidence to see if onshore natural gas
Tricky one! Inform the public of pros and cons and what is planned. Ask 10% of the state voters randomly picked by computer to vote on it and abide by their decision
Undertake a proper and thorough cost benefit analysis and publish the results
A full environmental study
ACT ON IT NOT WASTE TIME
ask the locals and make sure that adequate research and money is given
be fair toward everyone
Be honest to the public about the health and environmental impact it could have.
Be truthful to the public about the benefits and the downside
Bring it in but regulate it so it doesn't ruin any environment
check check check...just because they say its so does not make it so

Check costs and see if it is for the benefit for the people without causing additional expenses and it does not affect the environment
Check it out
Complete and detailed regulation following community consultancy
Consider carefully, put appropriate legislation in place to regulate companies involved and protect farmers/communities.
Consult with the companies & land owners
control in all aspects
do more studies about any impacts
Don't know but protection of the environment is paramount .The real problem is that world parity pricing arising from increased supply will be a huge negative for the average person.
don't rush into anything take the time to check out all the plus/minuses before going ahead and insure they have world leader in the industry to do the job not just the cheapest tender
Educate the community on advantages and disadvantages, particularly the fracking process
enforce strict rules
Ensure minimal damage to local communities and the environment.
Ensure safety for all
Ensure that contamination of landscape and water will not be a problem
Ensure that it is safe, farmers and land owners are compensated well and that prices should be much lower for consumers
Ensure that there is always full consultation, and advice with the people and the 'experts' and government.
ensure the integrity of the industry operators, and the risks to the environment and landowners
ensure there are no detrimental affects
Ensure tight controls over impacts/emissions/water monitoring
Explore all options and be transparent
Explore more about suitability
Extensive community consultation and education processes.
xxxxed if I know
Fully investigate all possible ramifications of the proposed industry and if there were any possibility of damage to the environment then legislation should be enacted to prevent it. What we destroy in decades could take centuries to rectify if at all
Fully understand the possible consequences before moving ahead
Get a vote
Give the public plenty of information about.
Go ahead with it
Have a referendum after fully explaining all aspects of this industry
I have no idea
I think the state and federal government should make sure they have all the ""i's"" dotted and the 'T's"" crossed and then some to make sure that it is feasible and hopefully no one will be put out and ripped off by all concerned.
Implement it
Introduce ironclad rules & regulations that ensure all ""owners"" of any company involved in on-shore gas are held personally accountable.
investigate it fully
Look at it truthfully and honestly then tell the truth to the people
Look before you leap, if you are using our Money.
make better
Make it happen
Make laws to keep the site/s safe and ensure that they don't adversely affect farmers, wildlife and local residents
Make sure it has been fully researched and is safe for the environment.
Make sure it is completely safe
Make sure it is safe
make sure most people want it

Make sure that all possible effects both to the community & the environment is safe
Make sure that it benefits the community
Make sure that it does not do any significant damage
make sure that it is going to be 100 percent safe for everyone
Make sure that it is strictly regulated and monitored and ensure that property owners have the right to refuse exploration on their land.
Make sure that it's regulated & fair for land owners
Make sure that the environment is protected
make sure that there are no adverse environmental aspects to the industry and make sure everyone is fully compensated if affected by the industry
make sure that there is no environmental impact
Make sure that whatever is done is done right for the state
make sure the farmers get a fair price for their land or the usage of their land and that the environment will be ok
make sure the land is not ruined and that gas prices are cheaper
Make sure the resources are there and make sure they are divided appropriately.
making sure that its safe and doesn't have any long term negative impacts
Minimise any damage to the environment
monitor effectively
No amount of regulation by government can prevent accidents or accidental contamination occurring, the process is risky, large companies may compromise safety or the environment in the pursuit of profits, there needs to be strong consultation
Not include coal seam gas
not sure because I don't know enough about the fact
Nothing.
own it and not sell it to private a comp
Protect the landowners and the public who employ them
Provide a wide range of informational materials to provide the community with knowledge (e.g. newspaper, TV news, radio, letters, etc.) Ensure that the benefits outweigh the negatives
Public awareness
Regulate and monitor it especially where it affects farmers and landscape/tourism
Regulate the industry
Regulation & monitoring
Research the parties extensively to be able to make informed decisions based on other factors than money. Keep the industry under control of Australian enterprises, not offshore companies where the profits are taken out of the country
safety
safety/more employment local jobs
seek expert opinion
sell it to the public
Set up a regulating body. Ensure ALL tests and balances are done before allowing this to happen. Lots of consultation with all stakeholders
Start an Independent Commission Against Corruption so that the inevitable political bribery can be exposed.
Stop exporting gas to china for cheap when we could be using it ourselves and make life here much better
strict regulation and strong enforcement of any breaches
Strict regulations
Strongly consider the environmental impact, particularly on farm land, when an accident happens or things go wrong. It’s too late once any damage is done.
Support it
Support it if there is no threat to environment in using this energy
talk to consumers first in all parts of Victoria at meetings thru local government

Talk to the farmers. Look at the land and water reserves where onshore natural gas industry has been overseas and study their effects.
the environment and all the risk factors
They should ensure that all the work involved in extracting is safe and does not affect the local area's in a negative way. That should ensure that it is sold at a fair price internally in Australia and should not be tied to a world price.
Thoroughly research environmental impact that the industry may have.
Tightly regulate the industry
To ensure there are economic benefits to the state, not just profits for overseas investors
To make sure its profitable without destroying the environment
To monitor the process of production ensuring the health and wellbeing of the community is priority.
Totally independent survey and research
tread carefully and consult with stakeholders like farmers and landowners
why start
Will it help the PEOPLE of the state
Write up a doc about the onshore natural gas to let the gen public know about the full impact on the land and the water table.
OTHER
I don't think it should happen. If it does happen it needs to be strictly, closely regulated and. Monitored. Landowners should have the ability to say 'no' and not be forced to allow industry on their land.
Independent regulators. Not biased towards the energy companies or vote catching promises from the government. Definitely no selling to overseas interests
A lot more research. Have regulations in place. Learn from existing Onshore Natural Gas operations
A lot of independent research into environmental/economic etc. impacts and consult and inform residents of areas possibly affected by the industry
A study to look at the long term effects of these types of industries on communities, individuals, the environment, health, real estate, tourism, compared with the benefit to a multinational company who will pillage the country, pocket the profits
absolute safety to people and environment
Adopt the precautionary principle. It is no good putting in monitoring just discover the process was damaging in the first place. Proponents must be able to demonstrate that effects on the environment will be minimal BEFORE they are given licences
Ask for public opinion as to whether or not it is wanted, compensate farmers and households for reduced value of their properties and not put it close to low income areas as they already have enough eyesores and potential chemical hazards nearby.
Ask the people. Vote. Provide a significant amount of information to the people on what the implications are for this type of process, No Blind faith into believing that everything is going to be good.
awareness/safety
ban fracking
Ban it completely and invest in solar power
Ban it due to environmental impact risks and that is what the public wants!
ban it from the state of Victoria
ban it until all the questions are answered satisfactorily
Be absolutely sure that there will be no problems with water if fracking etc. is involved. In the long run farming and clean water may be of more benefit to Victoria.
Be accountable and transparent to all concerned with this proposal
be honest with Victorians
Be open and accountable (evidence of government (parties, individual MP's and government employee corruption makes me doubt this will happen). Ensure that no Victorian is disadvantaged, and preferably ensure that Victorians benefit
Be sure that there will be no environmental damage
Be upfront and honest with their outcome not just play politics like they do most times, they are just as bad as big companies GREED driven ...
Be well informed about the intended processes and ensure that these are adequately monitored.
Check and double check that they are not going to do any damage to our country.

Check it properly
completely ban these operations
Conduct independent scientific studies.
Consider everyone, especially farmers and the individuals who will be impacted, and not just the business benefits
Consult the public
Consult the Victorian people to see if it is something that is wanted in Victoria.
Consultation and investigation
Create clear and unambiguous guidelines so if safe and cost efficient
critically examine all the advantages vs disadvantages and let the public know all the details
develop strict rules and regulation to ensure safety operations and the safety of the environment and community around it
Do a major study on any environmental impact
Do all the testing etc. possible and consult with the people
Do lot of research on the environmental effect on the land.
Do not allow fracking or any other risk to underground water supplies. Do not take seriously any guarantees by gas companies that their operations will not pollute water supplies, disrupt prime agricultural operations, or that the profits will be shared
DO NOT START AN ONSHORE NATURAL GAS PLANT
Do their job, keep an eye on it without lying to the public
Don't xxxx the world
Don't have an onshore natural gas industry
don't know cos I don't trust government
Donate money and resources
don't care about the government they don't care about us people
don't know anything about it so can’t comment
educate communities more about pros and cons
educate people about it before they decide to go ahead
Education, ensure proper compensation to affected farms, enforcing strict adherence by companies to fully defined and properly measurable environmental parameters.
Ensure all environmental studies are complete and unbiased.
ensure all regulations are carried out completely during operation of the mining
ensure it does not occur
Ensure it goes ahead, good for employment, financial growth
Ensure it has minimal negative impact on the environment and the agricultural industry.
Ensure it is not in any seismically unstable areas. Ensure the processes are very closely and tightly monitored. Ensure that where necessary adequate compensation is provided.
Ensure it is properly regulated and benefits go to the community. It should also be controlled by Australian owned companies
Ensure it is safe and above board dealing with the community and the land
ensure it is safe and has as little impact as possible on the community
Ensure it's safe
Ensure minimal environmental impact
Ensure only super qualified people conduct testing, finding, extracting etc. and have 'officials' making sure everything is going safely and correctly.
ensure regulation is easy to understand and comply with
Ensure safety to local communities and environment
Ensure strict regulations are made and followed by the companies who are mainly in it only for the money
Ensure that having the industry is in the interests of both the community and the environment.
Ensure that it does not affect the water supply
ENSURE THAT IT DOES NOT GO AHEAD!

Ensure that it does not have a negative impact on the environment.
ensure that it is entirely safe for humans
Ensure that it really is necessary. There are plenty of examples of government not being able to control things through regulation once they have started.
ensure that it would be totally safe for people living in the area and that all farmers and others living in the area are happy with any compensation they would receive otherwise just forget about it
Ensure that Landowners & Farmers have the protected right to refuse entry, analysis and all activity on their land. Protect every individual citizen's right to lock the gate.
Ensure that the environment and farmers are protected
Ensure that there is a sufficient supply and will be cheaper for people
ensure that there is no impact on environment before commencing
Ensure that there are no lasting environmental issues and that land holders are consulted and duly compensated.
Ensure the health of the people.
Ensure the process is risk free to the environment and the community generally before it authorises any extraction processes.
Ensure there are strict guidelines, re water supply issues and the community and make sure they are adhered to.
Ensure there is no harm to the environment and that it does not detract from the particular area of location
environmental safe guards
Establish very strict safeguards to exclude 'cowboy' operators. We do not want a repeat of the insulation disaster.
Exercise extreme care and investigate everything thoroughly. not be blinded by possible economic benefits and look into long term effects
Explain all the pros and cons
Explore all other avenues to determine which means is the least invasive with the greatest benefit to all before reaching an affirmative decision.
explore other, alternative energy resources first
Explore the processes used in other parts of the world
Find a location that is suitable and far enough from towns and ensure natural environment is not damaged by it.
Find information from other countries regarding the impact on the environment etc.
First establish, without any doubts, if it is safe for the environment
first make sure it is safe
forget about it
Gather info on similar projects around the world but not by sending politicians and their wives on a fact-finding junket around the world. Hop on the internet, pick up a phone, read all available data
get all the facts from other countries and weigh up the benefits for or against onshore natural gas in the future
Get all the information before making a decision.
Get it up and happening - support.
Get it up and running sooner rather than later
Get reliable (non corporate) scientific impact statements, before proceeding, about the best possible areas to develop onshore industries. Also have independent scientific monitoring of effects on communities and environments around the sites.
give more info
Give the public the right to refuse to have this industry on their own private land. Regulate the industry strictly.
Give us cheaper Gas as Overseas get it from us. We always pay more.
go for it
Go for it
Good for the environment
Government has a poor history of protecting the community from industry and their desire for a dollar
have a community debate, make sure companies don't walk all over land-owners
Have a referendum to see what the people thing as there are a lot of Greenies living in Gippsland and East Gippsland whom would chain themselves to tractors and machinery and fences in protest! Bloody greenies!
Have ample independent scientific advice, ensure regulations are more than adequate, and in the end not allow fracking!

Heed scientific research conducted on other failures throughout the world. Do not continue allowing this industry unless full research has been conducted. Be proactive.
help it to employ locals
Hold off for a while until fracking and other methods is field tested over a decade or two. We are not in urgent need yet if we are talking about export
I believe that the environmental issues & concerns are too great for the state government to allow this industry to proceed
I can't see anything that the current political framework can do to ensure that such an industry would be properly regulated. If it could, it could also force more investment in renewable energy rather than tilting at windmills.
I do not believe that I know enough about onshore natural gas industries to make an informed opinion.
I don't know as I don't really know enough information. I think they should ensure that the environment doesn't get damaged and that the community and people benefits, not just large companies
I don't know enough to form an opinion
I don't know what onshore gas even is
I don't know, I need more information
I don't think that they have the ability to do anything. Governments take too long to achieve anything
I don't trust that any State government can effectively regulate and police any operation dealing with these major gas and oil companies unfortunately.
I think extensive research needs to be done independently into the benefits and potential risks of the industry and present these findings to the public in order to get a wider opinion. The risks and costs to the environment and agricultural industry
I think off shore gas should be left in the ground and forgotten the gas companies cannot be trusted as like the power company's they will make gas prices only affordable to the rich screw the environment and stuff up all the drinking water for hundreds of years
I think the government should allow it
I think the state government should allow land holders to deny usage of their land to onshore natural gas and mining industries.
I'd prefer it if there was no onshore natural gas industry, but if there's no way to stop them, then they should be strictly controlled and monitored by not only the government, but an independent body.
If feasible means that there is no risk whatsoever, then the government must have it legislated in such a way that, at any time there is reasonable doubt as to the safety in any of the processes involved; they(the government)have the power to shut d
if it is more affordable for people go ahead
If it was feasible, the government would need to have strong safeguards in place to ensure that the environment and people are not affected either monetary wise or health wise. Ongoing checks should be in place to ensure that the companies involved
Ignore it and look at other job creation strategies
Ignore it completely.
inform the public
implement it
Independent comprehensive scientific environmental studies for each site to be undertaken. It must be independent.ie No Government (as they are a key stake holder) no O&G companies or affiliates. No green bodies. Purely scientific e.g. CSIRO etc.
Indicate early on to the public what safeguards would be put in place.
inform the public about the pros and cons in an unbiased fashion
Inform the public of it and its prices/uses/distribution.
Initial scope for this industry should occur slowly with pilot operations conducted in the more remote areas and scrutinized by bodies such as the CSIRO. Development of codes of practice should occur in conjunction with the pilot operations
Invest in renewables and leave the gas in the ground
Investigate risks, benefits, be proactive
Investigate the environmental effects this may have
Investigate the negative effects it may have and make sure it will not cause damage to the environment or loss of value to people in surrounding areas
Investigate the process thoroughly and base the decision on all aspects. The economic benefits should be a bonus not the basis of the decision. Then it needs to ensure that the profits are distributed fairly and evenly.

is be truthful about it to the public and gives us a chance to support or oppose the idea
It is all about money for these companies with no conscience for the consequences they leave behind with the environment and health issues for humans and wildlife. As well as the destruction underground causes impact no matter how the gas companies want it
It isn't feasible. It's all about the big companies making xxxx loads of money. You can sugar coat it all you want but that's the bottom line. If it destroys the environment or someone gets sucked down an 80m sink hole created by fracking they won't care
It needs to be heavily regulated with the needs of the community put well ahead of the needs of the companies involved
It should be made safe, if not it should not be used.
It should benefit the community with no health hazards.
It should conduct useful and informative information to the public, advice if it will have any impact on the land and water ways. A full investigation as to whether Onshore Natural Gas is the way to go.
Keep a very close eye on it, make sure it does not have any bad impact on the people who reside around it. The water should be tested carefully and land owners and farmers have the right of say whether they want it around their area and should never
keep regularly monitoring it don't just assume it’s all going ok
Keep the public aware of the progress and rewards, and unlike wind power, give us some benefits like cheaper gas.
Kill the idea immediately It's just greedy companies screwing as much as they can from the planet.
like
Listen to concerns of the local people and regulate heavily!
listen to the local communities, they are the people most likely to be harmed/disrupted, and have to live with it
Listen to the people who live around the areas involved
look after the environment and the people working condition
Look and study all aspects and possibilities, scientific, environmental and moral. I believe the government has already failed on this!
look at the environmental impact, job creation and the location of where it can be created and sustained
look into it
Look to other states to ensure there is no environmental damage, which I believe there is in Queensland
Look very closely at the huge environmental impacts it has had, particularly in the USA
look very closely at the possible effects of such an industry and listen to people’s concerns
make absolutely sure it is safe for people and the environment
Make ABSOLUTELY sure is environmentally safe & that ALL landowners affected are fairly compensated.
Make gas cheaper and safe for consumers
Make involved companies responsible at every level of operation and closely watch and regulate same
make it an election issue
Make it cheap to the consumer! I freeze every winter as I can't afford to use my heater!
Make it cheaper to, use
Make sure the environment is not affected as well as when mining is finished there.
make sure companies involved are professional, follow all safety requirements, are accountable to Victorians, minimize risks, make sure all Victorians benefit and not just the companies involved, make sure farmers are adequately compensated
make sure cost and impact on the earth keep low
Make sure everyone is happy with the decision and environmental and community factors have been considered
make sure it is 100@plyable,safe.and the community is not affected in any way
Make sure it is a safe viable option for all concerned.
make sure it is not an eye sore and people are compensated for the use of their land
Make sure it is safe and does not spoil the landscape.
Make sure it is safe and there is no damage to livestock, people and the environment.
Make sure it is safe and will leave no impact on the environment
Make sure it is safe for the community before proceeding with it

Make sure it is safe for the environment and that people are adequately compensated for land etc. and that the price of gas would be less for the consumer
Make sure it is strongly regulated
Make sure it's not a profit-driven exercise. It needs to be fully researched before implementation and any landowners compensated accordingly. The impact to the environment needs to be carefully considered before anything goes ahead. Unfortunately
make sure its cheaper for the community
make sure that any economic benefits go to the Victorian public & not to the pockets of the management of the companies involved
Make sure that is safe that the communities affected by it are well compensated that it creates LOCAL JOBS - not from interstate or elsewhere. Where ever it goes, it must work for that community and lift work etc. in that area.
Make sure that it is safe and environmentally friendly
Make sure that it never happens.
Make sure that onshore gas practice ethical business
Make sure that the exploration and any subsequent industry produces NO short term or long term environmental impacts. Any Government that cannot do that should not allow the industry
Make sure that they operate safely and are doing the right thing by the area they are.
Make sure the companies stick to all the rules and regulations.
Make sure the legislation is sound
Make sure there are no deals done between government and companies no corruption
Make sure there are sufficient policies in place to minimise damage to the environment
Make sure they communicate with local people and they get fair compensation. Local government have their say.
make sure they obtain as much money as possible for themselves out of it
Make sure they really have scientific data
Making it safe & not putting prices up.
Monitor any risks to humans and pets
monitor operations and effect on environment
more research and better education about pros and cons
more research and consultation
My Husband says it is feasible
need more details to form an opinion
nil
no
No comment
NOT ALLOW IT as the people, animals and the environment are much more valuable than sucking up to multinational big business who only care about profits. And the statement that Onshore Natural Gas industry would help keep gas prices down in Victoria
Not allow it in the first place
Not allow it to be conducted. Just look at the Wonthaggi Desalination plant. That was really useful wasn't it? hahaha what a joke.
Not allow it to happen if the farmer objects. Change the law that allows mining underground on someone's property. If someone owns land then they should own it right through to the centre of the Earth...like it is in America. Too much of the profits I
Not approve it
not destroying the environment we need to survive
Not do anything - help fund a rebate for people to move away from gas altogether.
Not fracture the earth and use gas available.
NOT GO NEAR IT WITH A BARGE POLE..... TAKE A LOOK AT HISTORY AND STOP REPEATING THE SAME SUPID ACTIONS OVER AND OVER AGAIN..... GROW UP, THIS RISKS ARE NOT WORTH THE COST, THERE WOULD NO SAVINGS AS THEY WOULD BE PASSED ONTO CUSTOMERS, AND THE D
Not let it go ahead.
Not permit it to happen.

Not privatize it.
Not Sure
Not sure /don't know.
Nothing happens unless the present landowner AGREES to sell the propert6y to any developer (without any duress).
Onshore natural should be thoroughly looked into by the government before it goes ahead.
Opposing it. Citizens are more important than profit. The government needs to empathy and start looking at people as people and not stats and numbers
oversee control
Own it. Don't sell it off like they have done with other things.
Prevent fracking operations. Give farmers the right to deny access to their land.
protect its water ways
Protect Landholders
Protect the environment and the people
protect the environment where the industry is to be located
prove it won't have any effect on agriculture and homes close by
Provide more information and ensure that farmers are not disadvantaged as a result
provide more information to the public
provide people with information about it and put it to a vote
Put a permanent ban in place
Put it forward in their election campaign for people to vote on and see what people say
put out more information
Put people and their health before the mighty dollar.
put the people of Victoria first in regard to environment and health issues caused by possible ONG industry and not just think of the $ they may get and if agreeing to undertake ONG industry will benefit the government at election time - put Victoria
refuse and block any and all operations
refuse to allow it to occur
Regulate often. and penalties for non-co-operation should be extremely high
Regulate and control the industry with independent auditors and scientists to reduce the risk of false representation
regulate it strongly
Regulate its activities.
regulate the industry themselves
Regulate, inspect and do not allow self-regulation. Allow independent auditing of all aspects of the process
regulation
research
Research before beginning
research for feasibility
Research from areas as to damage to the environment and health risks.
Research properly and plenty of consultation with local communities likely to be affected.
Research the effects in other parts of the world including Australia.
research everything to make sure its safe and viable
Research, regulate, protect and act.
Research/ investigate then educate the public.
Respect and honour a landholders refusal to allow them onto his property
responsible
Safety must be at the forefront of any project. Watch for corrupt politicians and others who would profit without caring about the environment and community
Safety to community: - gas leaks - no contamination of water, soil, etc. - no creation of instability in the land itself - minimal damage to the environment

SCRAP IT
Seek an Independent Review outside of Government
Seek to find out only way.
set up rules and regulations, and make sure they are followed to the letter
Should not use fracking process. Should carefully monitor all proposals and legislate to ensure environment and local owners' rights are protected
Stop fracking
Stop it
Stop it from happening, landowners should not be bullied by these companies.
Stop it. Do NOT let it go ahead.
Stop them from using this practice until it can be completely shown that there will be no effects to people or the land that they propose to work on as these chemicals can get into the ground water which we drink & may be used by farmers to irrigate
Strict regulations to ensure human and environmental safety.
Strong regulations
Strongly regulate the industry. Actively monitor all operations.
support
Support environmental studies into harvesting on shore gas
support it more
Take it slow and check their facts thoroughly.
Take it slowly and LISTEN TO THE SCIENTISTS PROPERLY FOR ONCE!! As stated before I have very few reservations about normal type gas wells/drilling if properly monitored and controlled but a lot of reservations about fracking particularly in important
Take it to a vote/referendum of all eligible Victorian voters
take it to the state election and give the people a chance to have their say
take people comments into account
Test all facets of the process before making a decision
That any onshore gas exploration is environmentally safe with no ill effects to people living in the area.
That they do not lease out to unreliable companies who at the time profess to know everything about this type of project. I am very wary about anything that may undermine the viability of our underground aquifers. I feel that our country may well b
That would depend upon the outcomes and recommendations of the very thorough feasibility study which would have to be undertaken to determine both whether there are sufficient deposits to justify an attempt at extracting onshore gas, and determine and
The government need to explain the processes and safety precautions undertaken to the general public. Also to answer honestly and questions that are asked.
The main issue to see if Onshore Natural Gas is feasible in Victoria is the impact this type of industry would have on water supplies and environment.
The State Government should Be well informed by the companies that are involved also oversee the progress being conducted
There have to be stringent regulations & scientific support to ensure that any explorations do not impact on the environment.
They need to ensure environmental issues are looked at and monitored very carefully
They should back and fund it
they should ban companies being able to use any land they want
They should be in safeguards for all parties, farmers, communities, companies etc. to at least going someway to regulate and compensate where necessary.
They should consult and listen to the people who would be impacted by this industry, the farmers and landowners in particular.
they should ensure that no landowner is forced to have the onshore gas exploration taking place on their property against their wishes, and similarly the surrounding region should be consulted and advised of the risks and advantages if any
Think long and hard about it!!!
think more long term than what they think they need now

Thorough consultation with landholders and those objecting to the industry. Consultation with scientists familiar with the process of what needs to be done and the impact on environment.
Thoroughly investigate processes, environmental impact, industry control measures, contamination reduction measures and agricultural impacts.
To be honest, I don't know!
to ensure that it is safe to people, animals and the environment
To make shore it has little impact on the environment
To make sure that the environment isn't going to be impacted in a negative way and to make sure any damage that is done can be fixed and not be permanent.
to make sure that they operate fairly, land owners are fairly compensated and that the area is returned to its natural state at the finish of mining
Transparent about the benefits to the populace and the interested parties likely to be awarded contracts
Undertake investigations through a reputable company to see if gas is underground in Vic.
Very strict regulations about the types of casings and chemicals used in the extraction process. Extremely high penalties for any failures and high compensation for any breakdown in safety measures. Community consultation?
wait & see
We are going to run out of gas, but if we don't at least try we will never know.
Weigh up the long term affects as well as the economical ones.
Whatever they did could or would be changed if the government thought it was beneficial to the government. Governments only do things that they believe will keep them in power.
work with it for the best outcome for the state
Work with the local area and give everyone full information.
You can't trust Liberal governments. They are all about extracting the maximum dollar for themselves and their friends and rich business leaders and they do not care about normal people, the environment, the planet etc.

Better thinking. Better solutions. **Primary.**