



Importance of CSG sessions reconfirmed

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AgForce Projects has launched its second phase of CSG information sessions to a group of concerned landholders in Moura and Theodore, a clear sign the industry is ramping up in the region and landholders want more specific information about how to prepare to negotiate with CSG companies.

While AgForce has previously visited the region to deliver information sessions, this second round is designed specifically to help landholders prepare property information to use during negotiations with resource companies.

AgForce Projects CSG project officer Natalie Pears told participants it was great to see landholders taking steps to get the information needed to help put them in the best position to negotiate a fair deal.

“The negotiation stage is crucial to help you get the best outcome for your property,” Ms Pears said.

“When it comes down to it you are a business negotiating with another business so you need to know exactly what the resource company will be doing on your property, and this means finding out more than just the number of wells they want to construct.”

Ms Pears said while the Land Access Code and standard conduct and compensation agreements (CCA) were a good start, these should only be considered a starting point to help landholders develop an agreement specific to their property and circumstances.

“You need to look at the standard provisions in relation to your individual property requirements and ask yourself whether this goes far enough to safeguard your property and business from unwanted impacts.”

“If not, you need to develop and negotiate provisions specific to your individual circumstances.”

Landholders should consult legal professionals before signing any agreement.

Ms Pears said it is important landholders understand the importance of conduct provisions and don't focus solely on compensation.

“Too often landholders focus on compensation, but having conduct provisions in place to prevent impacts from occurring in the first place can help alleviate unwanted stress.

“Having a say in how the company conduct themselves while on your property can make life a lot easier down the track but it means you need to identify as many risks to your property as possible and set conduct provisions in place to prevent these from happening.”

Ms Pears said one example of why landholders may need to build on the standard CCA is the issue of weeds.

“It is a legal requirement that resource companies prevent the spread of declared weeds, but what if you have just undertaken pasture improvements or want to prevent certain grasses or weeds from coming onto your property?”

“Think about negotiating a conduct provision restricting vehicle movement on your property or requiring localised wash-down facilities.”

“With these provisions in place you can greatly reduce the risk of unwanted weeds entering your property and avoid the need for compensation and unwanted stress.”

Ms Pears said landholders need to include a provision for the agreement to be reviewed periodically to allow for any unforeseen impacts to be worked into the agreement down the track.

Landholders were provided with a list of possible conduct and compensation considerations as a guide to help them prepare their own impact assessment before entering into negotiations.

For comment call AgForce Projects communications officer Madeline Cooper (07) 3238 6060 or 0488 002 091

Photo Caption: Jan Nimmo, Billy and Desleigh Murray and AgForce Projects CSG project officer Natalie Pears at the Theodore CSG information session on Wednesday, 29 August 2012.