

Media Release

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HELP SHAPE HOW THE NEW ONSHORE GAS INDUSTRY IS OVERSEEN

Victorians are being encouraged to have their say on how the restart of the onshore gas industry is overseen in the state.

The new *Petroleum Regulations 2021* are now open for feedback ahead of being finalised in the coming months, to guide explorers and developers on new requirements to better engage with the community and be more transparent.

The onshore conventional gas restart follows three years of detailed scientific investigations by the Victorian Gas Program, overseen by the independent Stakeholder Advisory Panel chaired by Victoria's Lead Scientist, Dr Amanda Caples. It found an onshore conventional gas industry would not compromise our environment or farming sector.

Conventional gas extraction is a tried and tested method to access gas deep underground trapped by an impermeable rock layer and does not involve fracking, which is now prohibited and the ban enshrined in the *Victorian Constitution*.

Since the lifting of the onshore conventional gas moratorium, Earth Resources Regulation has inspected existing onshore conventional gas sites as part of a program to ensure compliance with existing safeguards and that the industry is prepared for the new regulatory regime.

The draft *Petroleum Regulations 2021* and associated Regulatory Impact Statement are available for comment at engage.vic.gov.au until 3 September. We want to hear from the community before finalising the regulations.

An online information session will also be held on Thursday, 12 August to help anyone interested to further understand the proposed changes, the feedback process, and next steps. More details can be found at earthresources.vic.gov.au/onshoregas.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Resources Jaclyn Symes

"The draft regulations are a step forward in ensuring Victorian communities are better engaged about local developments – I expect the industry will step up and meet these important requirements."

"Victorians use gas for their homes and businesses – that's why it's important we look for opportunities to safely increase supply while we transition to zero carbon alternatives."