

Minutes
GISERA QLD Regional Research Advisory Committee Meeting No. 12
Thursday, 9 April 2020
Via telephone

OPENING

The meeting of the GISERA Queensland Regional Research Advisory Committee (RRAC) was called to order at 2.35 pm (AEST) on Thursday, 9 April 2020.

PARTICIPANTS

Damian Barrett: GISERA Director (*CSIRO*)
Will Rifkin: Director and Chair in Applied Regional Economics (*Hunter Research Foundation Centre, UON*)
Anne Bridle: Independent (*farmer from Western Downs and member of BSA*)
Wayne Newton: Independent (*former Grains President AgForce*)
Sanjeev Pandey: Executive Director (Office of Groundwater Impact Assessment)
Tony Rutter: Senior Environmental Advisory (*Origin*) – for Matt Kernke
Patrick McKelvey: Manager, Geology and Groundwater Services (QGC)
Cameron Huddlestone-Holmes: Principal Research Scientist (CSIRO)

Others present:

Jizelle Khoury: GISERA Executive Officer (*CSIRO*)

Apologies:

Matt Kernke: Senior Environmental Specialist – East Operations (APLNG)

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

ITEM 1. Welcome and apologies

The GISERA Director welcomed all members to the meeting.

ITEM 2. PROJECT VARIATION

Potential Health Impacts from CSG

Key points raised:

- This is a complex and high priority project. It is important the outcome increases the confidence in certainty around information that is available on potential health issues. This is the purpose of the variation proposed.
- This project represents the first application of the framework (Australian Health Impact Assessment Framework) developed out of the original GISERA health project 'Human Health effects of Coal Seam Gas Activity Study Design'.
- The framework is based on three key principles: 1/ being open and transparent; 2/ensuring community and stakeholder involvement throughout the application of the framework and health study; and 3/ provide options and to look at how any potential negative health impacts could be mitigated and positive benefits could be promoted.
- The intention of this project was not to go through the whole framework from beginning to end, but to focus on the first half which is identifying any potential hazards in a specific study site. The site-specific aspect of this project is critical. Looking at the factors (chemical and physical) and assessing them as to whether there is a plausible pathway for them to reach and impact on human health in a specific study site.
- The two challenges the project team face is: 1/ the complexity of the task, how to address that complexity in order to generate an outcome that is useful; and 2/ the amount of work to bring together a database that is representative of all the activities that have happened across industry in terms of its development at the study site in the Surat region.
- The project team's data requests have been broad and comprehensive. Much of the data has arrived at later stages of the project and some data gaps remain. However, the researchers are confident they now have a representative data set of all CSG activities in the region.
- The framework developed in the original health project had identified what datasets were available but provided limited information to the team on the scale of this task. The data collation and quality control issues around the database are intensive and require a significant amount of work that is realised as part of this application of the framework. This identification stage has taken longer than anticipated and in planning the project, the team underestimated the size of the task of understanding the CSG activities in the study site, compiling the relevant data and assessing it.

- The project now has a wide ranging and representative dataset to use and apply the identifications component of the health framework. There has been some rescoping of some of the activities that this project will be able to achieve. The re-scoping has been done with input from the Local Stakeholder Reference Group (LSRG), the Technical Reference Group (TRG) and the Steering Committee.
- The re-scoping proposed includes:
 - Task 3 – Identification Stage will require significant additional resources to complete to an acceptable level. The identification task is the core component of the project and it must be the focus for the project to deliver the most value.
 - Task 4 - Screening is effectively being conducted as part of the identification process (as datasets are interrogated to identify factors).
 - Task 5 - Further assessment - as the project has evolved the feasibility of conducting this assessment with the resources available has been questioned by the project team. It is likely that the methodologies proposed for "further assessment" will be highly specific to the factor in question, decreasing the utility of an exemplar study. The project team, in consultation with the LSRG, Technical Reference Group and Steering Committee believe that focussing these resources on the identification task will provide a better outcome for the project.
 - Key stakeholder engagement. A risk communication workshop held as part of the project identified that there is potential for the results of the study to cause community concern if they are presented without suitable context and without any indication of how any hazards identified will be addressed. Similar concerns have also been expressed by the project's LSRG. This is a new activity that is critical in ensuring the uptake of the results of the research.
- The revised project plan will require an additional \$172,599 (\$138,479 GISERA funding and \$34,120 CSIRO funding) to complete the project. This takes into account \$158,000 which will be recouped from original project funding. Funds originally allocated for the screening and further assessment milestones have been re-allocated to the identification milestone that has been split into two tasks. The additional funding is required to cover:
 - The higher than expected workload in the identification stage. CSIRO's collaboration agreement with the Queensland Alliance for Environmental Health Science will be extended by \$195,000 to allow for the completion of this task.
 - Additional workshops to engage with industry and regulatory stakeholders about the findings of the identification tasks.
 - The time extension of the project and the associated overheads.
 - Additional resources for the final reporting

- Project milestones will now include:

Milestone	Milestone description	Cost (including in-kind)	Due date
Task 1	Governance and ethics	(unchanged) \$55,827	Already completed
Task 2	Scoping	(unchanged) \$44,439	Already completed
Task 3	Identification progress	\$482,366	29 May 2020
Task 4	Identification final	\$294,938	18 Sept 2020
Task 5	Stakeholder consultation on communicating identification outcomes	\$17,140	30 Oct 2020
Task 6	Final reporting and engagement activities	\$128,182	27 Nov 2020

Outcome: The RRAC approved the project variation which includes changes to milestones 3-6 and their associated costs. This represents an overall project budget increase of \$172,599 and a project delivery date of 27 November 2020.

ITEM 3. OTHER BUSINESS

No items raised.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the QLD Regional Research Advisory Committee is yet to be scheduled. It is anticipated that a meeting will occur once future proposals are established.

Damian Barrett adjourned the meeting at 3.20 pm (AEST).

Minutes submitted by: **Jizelle Khoury**

Minutes approved by: **Damian Barrett**