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NSW Draft Regional Land Use Plans onerous

The Draft Strategic Regional Land Use Plans package released by the NSW Government today contains onerous, additional processes for the review of applications for mining and coal seam gas production in areas designated as “strategic agricultural land.”

Santos will seek urgent talks with the Government to gain a full understanding of how the extra hurdles for assessment of CSG production applications will work in conjunction with the already extensive State and Commonwealth regulations.

Santos understands and accepts the objectives of NSW Government’s new policy. However, it is important to understand that any new regulation for the CSG industry is in addition to current heavy and stringent regulation in NSW.

Santos Vice President Eastern Australia, James Baulderstone, said that because the CSG industry is already one of the most heavily regulated industries in Australia, it is critical that any new policy does not duplicate or contradict an already very complex, time consuming and expensive assessments process.

“Santos supports independent, science-based assessment and decision processes. However, it is important that such assessments are managed to avoid bureaucratic duplication, unnecessary delays and costs,” Mr Baulderstone said.

“We are very concerned about the potential impact of these policies on our continuing ability to deliver new sources of natural gas to New South Wales, as we have done safely and sustainably for nearly four decades. Natural gas must remain an important energy source for our NSW residential and industrial customers.

“Until we can ascertain the precise impacts of today’s draft policy proposals we will reserve judgment.”

Ends.