

Media Release

More than half of Gloucester people surveyed see benefit of AGL in community

27 November 2013

More than 50 percent of people in Gloucester and the surrounding areas said there were benefits to having AGL Energy operate in the region, a community survey has found.

When asked what benefits there were of AGL working in the region, 47 percent said cheaper / cleaner energy, 41.8 percent said employment opportunities, 36.6 percent said bringing money into the region and a further 11.9 percent said improved infrastructure.

The research was conducted in September 2013 by Jetty Research and comprised three consecutive random telephone surveys of 1,000 people of which 200 were in the Gloucester/Manning area. The remainder were in Camden, Hunter and NSW metropolitan and regional areas where AGL does not have operations.

It was clear from the survey that coal seam gas is an issue that local Gloucester/Manning residents are following, with 53 percent of the residents surveyed said they were closely following the debate, up 20 percent since 12 months ago. The number of people opposing coal seam gas, however, had barely shifted despite the media and social media interest in the topic.

50 percent of those surveyed from Gloucester/Manning were neutral or supportive of coal seam gas, while 50 percent were opposed.

"This survey, conducted by an independent organisation, shows that people in the Gloucester/Manning area do see the benefits to AGL being here," said Julie Delvecchio, Head of AGL's Community Relations.

"We understand the opinions of those who do have concerns but there is a significant proportion of the community who are neutral in the coal seam gas debate and we do what we can to make ourselves available to people who aren't sure and have questions," Ms Delvecchio said.

"Last week we held four community information sessions in Gloucester which was attended by a total of 34 people who all had relevant questions that sought details on what we are doing in the local area.

"We are working side by side with the local community, business and industry to ensure our operations are conducted without harm to human health or the environment, which is of utmost importance to us at AGL Energy. We have been

doing this in Camden for 13 years and contribute positively to the local community there.”

In the more broad results, people were asked to nominate (unprompted) what was the most important issue of concern for them with 41 percent of those surveyed in NSW being concerned about the cost of living, compared to 10 percent being concerned with environment/climate change.

For those who nominated the environment/climate change, they were asked what was the particular environmental issue that concerned them, with global warming and “other” ahead of coal seam gas.

James Parker, Managing Director of independent research firm Jetty Research, said there were some unexpected results from the survey.

“We were surprised that coal seam gas has so little top-of-mind awareness, despite the huge media attention,” James said.

Further inquiries:

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About AGL

AGL is one of Australia's leading integrated renewable energy companies and is taking action toward creating a sustainable energy future for our investors, communities and customers. Drawing on over 175 years of experience, AGL operates retail and merchant energy businesses, power generation assets and an upstream gas portfolio. AGL has one of Australia's largest retail energy and dual fuel customer bases. AGL has a diverse power generation portfolio including base, peaking and intermediate generation plants, spread across traditional thermal generation as well as renewable sources including hydro, wind, landfill gas and biomass. AGL is Australia's largest private owner and operator of renewable energy assets and is looking to further expand this position by exploring a suite of low emission and renewable energy generation development opportunities.

About the research

The research comprised three consecutive random telephone surveys, with some questions in common. Surveys were as follows;

- 400 people (200 metro, 200 regional) in areas of NSW unaffected by coal seam gas exploration - conducted late August 2013.
- 400 people (200 Gloucester, 200 Manning regions) – conducted early September
- 200 people in the Macarthur (Camden) region – conducted mid-September.

Random sampling error (RSE) will vary with sample size – from +/- 3.1 percent for questions involving all 1,000 respondents, to +/- 6.9 percent for individual regions of 200. (In each case, RSE is calculated at the 95 percent confidence level.)

In each survey, results were post-weighted to match ABS 2011 Census data for age and gender.