



The Hon Anthony Roberts MP

Minister for Resources and Energy

Special Minister of State

MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday 6 March 2014

GOVERNMENT CONDEMNS EXTREMIST BEHAVIOUR OF PROTESTERS IN NORTHERN NSW

Minister for Resources and Energy Anthony Roberts today condemned the intimidation of a farmer and his family by extremist groups near Casino, in northern NSW.

Farmer Peter Graham, who signed a land access agreement to allow a conventional gas well to be drilled on his property, has been subjected to a range of verbal threats, property damage and intimidating behaviour.

Mr Graham's gates have repeatedly been chained, padlocked and welded shut, while barriers made of concrete and metal spikes have been laid across his driveway.

Mr Roberts said there is no place in modern Australia for this type of behaviour.

"The NSW Government respects the right to protest peacefully, however we condemn bullying, harassment and intimidation from any quarter, whether it is by extremist groups, industry or others," Mr Roberts said.

"Anyone undertaking this kind of behaviour is not contributing to a respectful and responsible debate, no matter what the issue. They are discrediting themselves, their organisations and their cause.

"When farmers allow access to their property, they are making a decision based on the facts and information before them, and other individuals, protest groups and businesses should respect that.

"I am calling on individuals, community groups and organisations to join the NSW Government in condemning this unacceptable behaviour."

NSW Farmers Association President Fiona Simson said NSW Farmers wholeheartedly supports farmers having a say in what happens on their land.

"This means that we support a farmer's decision to say no to certain activities, and conversely, we also support a farmer's decision to say yes and welcome certain activities," Ms Simson said.

"We will not and we do not however, condone behaviour that is criminal, puts lives at risk and is threatening towards those landholders, who for their own reasons have chosen to say yes to certain activities on their land."

*Attached is a photo of the steel spikes laid across Mr Graham's driveway.