

## LEGISLATIVE TRENDS IN THE EASTERN STATES AND THEIR IMPACT FOR THE QUEENSLAND EXPLORER

by

R. Skerman

Director

Resource & Land Management Services

Increasingly these days the traditional "one stop shop role" of state government mining and petroleum departments that we, as explorers had come to take for granted, appears to be becoming as endangered as the bilby. Interstate trends indicate a major prerequisite role is being played by the environmental or land management agencies. Will the DRI be able to continue its traditional Queensland role? Is the clean up "to the satisfaction of the minister" trending towards the Environment Minister's standards?

In the recently revamped Queensland Mineral Resources Act, security deposits on rehabilitation and EMOS for environmental management emerge as significant issues. Will these affect the petroleum explorer in Queensland's proposed new Petroleum Act?

The impact of the Contaminated Land Act with its "polluter pays" principle is generally considered not to apply to the petroleum explorer/producer. However when the cover of a petroleum title expires won't you be subject to the provisions of that Act? You beam pump and tank sites for example could be on par with the service station site as far as contamination is concerned.

In the land access field the legislation is accelerating at an alarming pace alienating more land from the explorer. This paper discusses the impact of various new pieces of Queensland legislation, their history and potential impact including the changes to the Land Act, Aboriginal Land Rights and the various Acts under the Environment & Heritage banner.

As a relatively small, compact industry our best chance for continued efficiency in operations is to stay ahead of these changes, evaluate their impact in other states and promote the Resource Industries Department as the "one stop shop" for all our operational needs. Our traditional self regulatory role needs to be audited thoroughly in order that the industry can defend its position with confidence against criticism levelled by the legislator and the community at large.