

RPI Act amendments

This factsheet provides an overview of the amendments to the *Regional Planning Interests Act 2014* (RPI Act) as a consequence of the *Regional Planning Interests (Condamine Alluvium) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2026* (the Bill).

Why are amendments to the *Regional Planning Interests Act 2014* necessary?

The Bill proposes new measures aimed at ensuring the assessment of CSG projects is balanced with strong protections for the Condamine Alluvium. It also includes amendments to clarify and expand compensation arrangements for CSG-induced subsidence.

Changes to the RPI Act support the Bill's objective to require gas companies to demonstrate beyond any reasonable doubt that new projects would not have a detrimental impact on the Condamine Alluvium, a large and significant water aquifer used for agricultural purpose.

The proposed changes will streamline the approval process for CSG activities in the Condamine Alluvium area providing clarity to a complex and lengthy process that involves separate assessments and approvals across several government agencies. These approvals include resource authorities, environmental authorities (EA), and regional interests development approvals (RIDA) (unless an exemption applies).

Key features:

- Introduction of a Condamine Alluvium CSG area map to provide a geographical boundary for the application of the proposed legislation. The area reflects the known CSG formations in the Condamine Alluvium and covers the areas that may pose the greatest risk to the aquifer.
- Removal of the requirement for a RIDA for CSG projects in the Condamine Alluvium CSG area. Instead of being considered under a RIDA application, protection of water quality in this area will continue to be managed under the *Environmental Protection Act 1994* (EP Act) and water quantity will continue to be managed under Chapter 3 of the *Water Act 2000*.
- Existing RIDAs will not be affected by these changes and a RIDA will still be required for non-CSG activities within an area of regional interest and CSG activities within an area of regional interest outside the proposed Condamine Alluvium CSG area.

What will the removal of the RIDA requirement achieve?

This streamlining approach provides a robust framework for the assessment of new CSG activities in the Condamine Alluvium CSG area, with stronger compliance and enforcement powers under the EP Act compared with the RPI Act. The EA framework also offers greater transparency and accountability through notification requirements and third-party appeal rights. This established framework is well respected by a broad range of stakeholders for providing a comprehensive assessment, and for its consultation and compliance features.

As the RIDA is generally the final approval for a new CSG activity, removing this requirement will provide a more predictable, front-loaded approval process. This will improve investor confidence in Queensland's resource sector and provide clarity and certainty to landholders.

In practice, many activities in the Condamine Alluvium already qualify for RIDA exemptions. Combined with a limited compliance and enforcement framework, a range of impacts on agricultural activities in the Condamine Alluvium are not being considered under the RIDA process at present. Therefore, removing the RIDA requirement does not represent a significant change in how impacts of agricultural activities are currently being assessed.

Changes to the RPI Regulation

The Condamine Alluvium is currently prescribed by the *Regional Planning Interests Regulation 2014* (RPI Regulation) as the Upper Condamine Alluvium (Central Condamine Alluvium) and the Upper Condamine Alluvium (Tributaries) under the *Basin Plan 2012* (Cwth).

To deliver this package of reforms, a new map will be prescribed by the RPI Regulation. The Condamine Alluvium CSG area map is largely consistent with the existing mapping, but excludes a tributary known as the Taroom Trough. The mapped area reflects the known CSG formations in the Condamine Alluvium and covers the areas that may pose the greatest risk to the aquifer.

The map will be published on the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning website.

When will the legislative amendments take effect?

If the Bill is passed, the amendments are expected to commence on assent. From that date forward, RIDAs would no longer be required for CSG activities in the Condamine Alluvium CSG area. However, it is important to note that these legislative amendments would not apply retrospectively, therefore existing RIDAs would continue to have effect as if the Bill had not commenced.

Are other legislative frameworks changing?

The Bill goes beyond delivering on the commitment to protect the aquifer by including a holistic government response to stakeholder concerns.

The Bill amends three legislative frameworks:

- *Environmental Protection Act 1994*
- *Mineral and Energy (Common Provisions) Act 2014*
- *Regional Planning Interests Act 2014* and Regional Planning Interests Regulation 2014.

Further information

For further information, please contact the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning via email at planningforqueensland@dsdilgp.qld.gov.au.