

From the office of the  
Minister of the Environment



Department of the  
**Environment**

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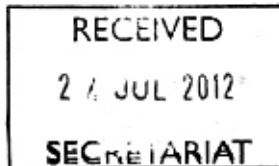
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20 July 2012

Dear Patrick

Thank you for your letter of 12 March 2012 regarding Dr Tony Bazley's appointment as a Director of Tamboran Resources Ltd, a company involved in shale gas exploration in the North of Ireland.

I note the assurances you have given me about the handling of potential conflicts of interest within CNCC. An active register of interests of all members is a good idea since it is evident that members' interests may not remain as they were at the time of their appointment. I believe this proposal has wide application.

I also note your comments about Dr Bazley's performance as a member of CNCC and the value of his expertise in earth sciences. These comments echo those of NIEA officials who have worked closely with him during his first three year term on the Council. Provided the potential conflict of interest created by his appointment to Tamboran is properly managed, and any potential conflict of any member on any issue is properly managed, the member should be able to serve the Council.

As I stated in my telephone call with you on 9 July, there is a different issue – namely, if it was the most wise course to ask a CNCC member to present to the council on an issue where the member has declared an interest, which is novel and contentious and where different views on the issue were not given the same opportunity. I accept that in asking for a presentation, the CNCC was entirely well motivated. However, it may not have been the better course of action for the CNCC.

This will be the view I shall express in a reply to an AQ from a member of the Assembly. I shall also be saying that I find the comments made by some incongruous, not acknowledging the contribution of CNCC ordinary members who are voluntary.