



Statement of Ralph Tijerina, CSP  
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Before the PA House Labor Relations Committee Hearing on

*Workplace and Safety Issues Relating to the Marcellus  
Shale Operations in Pennsylvania*

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Scranton, Pennsylvania

Good morning, Representative Murphy and members of the House Labor Relations Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Ralph Tijerina and I am the Director of Health, Safety, Security and Environmental for Range Resources Appalachia, LLC and as stated above, I am also the co-chair of the Marcellus Shale Coalition Safety Committee. I have approximately 32 years of industry experience with the last 3 years in Pennsylvania this month.

Safety is one of our values and not a priority as priorities are subject to change through time. For many in our industry, no incident is acceptable because the majority of all incidents are preventable. The MSC Safety Committee is made of industry representatives (operators), service companies, consultants, and governmental agency representatives such as Occupational Safety and Health

Administration, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, and the Lycoming County Department of Public Safety. The members of the Safety Committee are broken down further into disciplines to address areas more specific to the classification such as Crisis Management, Construction, Drilling, Completions, and Production/Midstream. From a safety perspective, subjects of the committee are in direct relationship to our industry and how they apply. Fall Protection, Signage on well sites, Pennsylvania PPC Plans (Preparedness, Prevention and Contingency Plans), Fire Resistant/ Retardant Clothing to name a few.

Industry is subject to numerous workplace safety laws and regulations such as OSHA's Standards CFR (Code of Federal Regulations) Part 1910 for General Industry and Part 1926 for Construction along with various recommended practices through API (Associated Petroleum Industry). Industry Operators utilize a number of means to ensure that safety programs exist and are being adhered to. Aside from internal training, operators utilize programs such as ISNetworld and PEC Premier. The objective of these programs is to determine how comprehensive a service company's safety program is. As you may already be aware, service companies who specialized in various aspects of the discipline perform the majority of the work conducted on the jobsite. ISNetworld, for example, uses a 300 plus questionnaire to gather initial information about the company's safety program including incident rates and regulatory fines or citations.



They, then, would request copies of their safety manual and training records. They review the documents for compliance with federal regulatory requirements and identify any shortcomings to the company. The company is scored based on the Operator's criteria and the score is communicated to the Operator in some cases as a red, yellow or green light. More descriptive information can be provided upon request.

Other reviews include the confirmation of employees receiving training such as Safeland, IADC, or OSHA 10 hour certification. These courses are comprehensive and provide solid safety training and orientations. My company, Range Resources, requires that all employees and contractors receive a Safety Orientation prior to performing any fieldwork for the company. This is conducted on an individual basis and upon completion; a hardhat sticker is given to the individual. This ensures that all personnel working for Range Resources understands the safety expectations of Range when on their worksite. Anyone who loses their sticker or is without a sticker is pulled aside and given a Safety Orientation and sticker prior to returning to work.

As with any other program, an audit or review must be conducted to ensure compliance. Spot checks are conducted to ensure that up to date certifications are on file, such as forklift certification. The certification cards, which identify its expiration date, are reviewed.



Wellsite inspections are conducted for various reasons but one of the primary reasons is to ensure a safe working environment is provided. Though all industries have different levels of hazards associated with them, there are various means to mitigate them. The first objective is to engineer out the hazard where available. If that could not be a viable option, then administrative controls can be implemented and in the end, personal protective equipment must be utilized.

Since 2008, I have been involved in training of First Responders in Pennsylvania to help them understand the potential hazards that exist on various stages of Natural Gas extraction. I believe that first responders must be aware of the environment they are responding to so as not to cause harm to themselves. Range Resources had worked with the Lycoming County Gas Task Force (Pennsylvania) to conduct a mock emergency drill for first responders in September of 2009 to identify areas of improvement and conduct a needs assessment. There were over 120 participants and various agencies were represented. Gaps were identified and efforts have been underway to close or eliminate them. We are currently working with the Pennsylvania State Fire Commissioner and the Pennsylvania State Fire Academy to develop a number of training modules for various departments of emergency response.

According to a May 2010 study produced by The Pennsylvania State University, College of Earth and Mineral Sciences, Department of Energy and Minerals Engineering titled *The Economic Impacts of the Pennsylvania Marcellus Shale Natural Gas Play: An Update*; “Marcellus producers plan to spend significantly more this year and next, generating more than \$8 billion in value added in 2010 and another \$10 billion during 2011 (see Table ES1). This higher economic activity generates almost \$1.8 billion in additional state and local tax revenues during 2010 and 2011. Employment in the state expands by more than 88,000 jobs during 2010 and over 111,000 jobs during 2011”. As the industry activity grows, it is imperative to ensure that a positive safety culture exists. The different stages of the safety culture should continue to improve to achieve the generative stage. In a mature safety environment, a safety based management system is utilized so non-conformities can be identified and corrective actions developed to prevent these from continuing to occur.

I will make myself available to answer any questions that the Committee wishes to address within the natural gas drilling operations in the Marcellus Shale to the best of my ability.

