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LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
Question on notice

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Wednesday, 28 September 2011

4794. Hon Robin Chapple to the Leader of the House representing the Premier.

I refer to the Premier's statement reported in the West Australian of 31 August 2011, on page 1, in which he is reported to have said 'while he supported protecting parts of the West Kimberley, including the Horizontal Waterfalls, a blanket listing would stymie development', and I ask -

- (1) Is the Premier aware that Pegasus Metals Limited made an ASX announcement on 14 September 2011 that they were about to commence diamond drilling at its McLarty range copper project?
 - (2) Is the Premier aware that the McLarty range copper project is in the ranges and ridges that surround both of the Horizontal Waterfalls?
 - (3) If yes to (1) and (2), what will the Premier do to stop the exploration and mining of the McLarty ranges by Pegasus metals or any other company in the area that surrounds the Horizontal Waterfalls?
 - (4) If no action is to be undertaken by the Premier, why not?
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(1) Yes.

(2) Yes.

(3) - (4)

Pegasus Metals Limited obtained approval from the Department of Mines and Petroleum earlier this year for a limited programme of diamond drilling to be carried out in a location situated 4 kilometres north-west of the Horizontal Falls. This approval followed the Environmental Protection Authority's decision not to formally assess the proposal under the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* given the low impact nature of the programme (total proposed disturbance was 0.255 hectares). The approval was subject to strict environmental standards, including minimising disturbance, through only being able to clear using hand tools and mobilising the drill rig via helicopter. Should exploration indicate there is significant mineralisation and it is economic then the proponent would need to obtain a mining lease and submit a formal mining proposal. Such a mining proposal would be very carefully scrutinised by government. The State's position is that no exploration and mining will be allowed around the Horizontal Falls that would in any way compromise the environmental and tourism values of the Falls.

CB