

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
Question on notice


- 3 MAY 2012

Thursday, 29 March 2012

5390. Hon Robin Chapple to the Minister for Mental Health representing the Minister for Health.

With reference to question on notice No. 4238, asked on 21 June 2011 and answered on 9 August 2011, I ask -

In a Freedom of Information request made by the Conservation Council of Western Australia in 2011, it was discovered that at the time there were 45 radiation management plans for exploration activities in Western Australia.

- (1) What is the current number of radiation management plans for exploration activities in Western Australia?
 - (2) How many of the radiation management plans are specifically for uranium exploration?
 - (3) How many of the sites, where there are radiation management plans, have been monitored, audited and surveyed?
 - (4) Will the Minister table the reports from the monitoring, audits and surveying?
 - (5) If no to (4), why not?
 - (6) Were these sites monitored by 'authorised officers' under the Radiation Safety Act 1975?
 - (7) If yes to (6), which agencies are the 'authorised officers' employed with?
 - (8) How many 'authorised officers' under the Radiation Safety Act 1975 and the Mines Safety and Inspection Act 1994 are there?
 - (9) What percentage of their hours is spent monitoring exploration projects that have a radiation management plan?
 - (10) Have the personal radiation monitoring providers provided dose reports directly to the Radiological Council?
 - (11) Will the Minister provide a summary report of the overall radiation, or particulate doses, of workers in uranium exploration in Western Australia?
 - (12) If no to (11), why not?
 - (13) Since the ban on uranium was lifted in 2008, how many extra staff has the Radiological Council employed?
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(14) What has been the cost to the Department of Health?

Answer

(1) There are 57 tenements with radiation management plans for exploration activities in Western Australia. Of these, five are registered under the *Radiation Safety Act 1975* for radioactive mineralisation.

(2) All of the plans in Question 1 are for uranium exploration.

(3) None. Two of the five sites registered under the *Radiation Safety Act 1975* have been visited by officers authorised under the Act. These were undertaken for site familiarisation only due to the nature of the work currently being conducted at these sites.

(4 - 7) Not applicable.

(8) There are eight officers currently authorised under the *Radiation Safety Act 1975*. Another two officers are expected to be authorised under the *Radiation Safety Act 1975* within the next few months. There are currently no authorised officers under the *Radiation Safety Act 1975* that are also a 'special inspector of mines' under the *Mines Safety and Inspection Act 1994*.

(9) Authorised officers' working hours are allocated as and when necessary to monitor exploration projects.

(10) Yes.

(11) No.

(12) A summary is not readily available as the monitoring reports provided to Council are for all persons monitored by the service providers and not just those involved in exploration activities.

(13) The Radiological Council does not employ its own staff. The Council relies on the Radiation Health Unit of the Department of Health for administrative and scientific support. No additional staff have been employed by the Radiation Health Unit.

(14) Not applicable.