

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

C445

QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE (Of which some notice has been given)

Thursday, 8 August 2013

Hon Robin Chappie to the Minister for Mental Health representing the Minister for Environment.

I refer to the land described as "Approximate spatial representation of part of Mining Tenements M15/497 and M15/498, located within Lot 101 on Plan 238594 as shown on certificate of title LR3135/691", and I ask:

1. Has the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) been made aware of mercury contamination on these tenements?
2. If yes to (1), when was DEC made aware?
3. Are either of these tenements, or any part thereof, declared by DEC as suspected contaminated sites?
4. If yes to (3), when were the declarations made?

I thank the Hon. Member for some notice of this question.

The Minister for Environment has provided the following response.

1. Yes. Soil analysis results were provided to the then Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) in 2007, in a report commissioned by the former tenement holders. In twenty-one out of twenty-two tailings samples from the site, the concentration of mercury exceeded the Ecological Investigation Level, as published in '*Assessment Levels for Soil, Sediment and Water*' (DEC 2010), but did not exceed the Health-based Investigation Level for residential sites, or the Health-based Investigation Level for commercial and industrial sites. In one sample, the mercury concentration exceeded the Health-based Investigation Level for commercial and industrial sites. The presence of a substance in soil at concentrations above the investigations levels is a trigger for further investigation to determine whether the substance poses a risk to the environment or human health.
2. Suspected mercury contamination at the site was reported to the then DEC on 1 June 2007.
3. Yes. Parts of the tenements have been classified under the *Contaminated Sites Act 2003* as *possibly contaminated – investigation required*.
4. 4 December 2012.

