

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Question on notice

Thursday, 12 March 2015

2859. Hon Robin Chappie to the Minister for Agriculture and Food representing the Minister for Mines and Petroleum.

I refer to the usage of water on Barrow Island for the purpose of tracking, and ask:

- (a) where does the water come from, and how is it transported;
- (b) where is the water disposed to, and how;
- (c) please explain the process for the tracking, transportation and biodegradation of the hydrocarbon plume;
- (d) are reports provided to the Minister from Chevron Australia;
- (e) if yes to (d), will the Minister table the reports; and
- (f) if no to (e), why not?

Answer

The Department of Mines and Petroleum (DMP) advises:

- (a) DMP cannot find any records on the water source used or how this water was transported for hydraulic fracturing on Barrow Island. Generally, injection water on Barrow Island has been supplied by two water wells and transported via a distribution piping network. However, since 2012, the introduction of the Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Resources (Environment) Regulations 2012 has ensured comprehensive reporting is undertaken for all environmental impacts.

DMP is currently not assessing any proposals for hydraulic fracturing on Barrow Island.
- (b) Water is disposed via the produced water disposal facility into deep water disposal wells on Barrow Island. Water disposal is managed by the Department of Environment Regulation (DER) under the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*, licence L4467.
- (c) The terms 'hydrocarbon plume' and 'tracking' are typically used in relation to a hydrocarbon leak from a surface facility (such as a service station or storage tank that are administered by DER in accordance with the *Contaminated Sites Act 2003*) and not hydraulic fracturing.

- (d) DMP does not have a historic catalogue of reports relating specifically to hydraulic fracturing on Barrow Island. This is because hydraulic fracturing has occurred on Barrow Island since 1965 and at that time there were no legislative requirements around environmental reporting.

More recently various environmental reports are submitted to DMP and DER in accordance with the above licence and the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* and the *Contaminated Sites Act 2003*. However, none of these reports are specific to hydraulic fracturing.

Chevron has a very good record in meeting its reporting requirements under relevant legislation through the long history of activities on Barrow Island.

- (e) No
- (f) See response to (d).

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized, cursive 'W' followed by a horizontal line.