

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Question Without Notice

Thursday, 21 February 2019

C128. Hon Robin Chapple to the Parliamentary Secretary representing the Minister for Health

I refer to Question Without Notice C009 asked by Hon Robin Chapple MLC to the Minister for Health on Tuesday, 12 February 2019, regarding the Tellus' Sandy Ridge Project and ask:

1. As the construction has now commenced at the site, without the detailed safety review as the Minister has mentioned in his reply, can the Minister assure the WA public that the project is absolutely safe, that all radiation baseline monitoring has been undertaken and that there will be absolutely no radioactivity leaks of any kind in the near, intermediate and far (10,000 years and more) future?
2. If yes to (1), can the Minister provide all technical grounds and justification for his opinion, especially modelling of the behaviour of all radionuclides to be disposed at the facility for 10,000-100,000 years?
3. If no to (2), why is the project that has not been determined to be safe be allowed to proceed?

Answer

I thank the Honourable Member for some notice of the question.

(1) The project is being approved in a staged process and the works occurring now at the site are the ones for which approvals have been assessed and granted.

(2)-(3) The plan is for the site to be in receipt of low level radioactive waste only and it is a requirement of approval that containment and shielding be provided until radioactive decay has significantly reduced the hazard due to radioactivity. Most of the radioactive isotopes that will be considered for approval at the site will have half-lives that will ensure that the material is not radioactive after 300 years.

