

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Question On Notice

Wednesday, 13 March 2019

1978. Hon Robin Chappie to the Minister for Regional Development representing the Minister for Mines and Petroleum

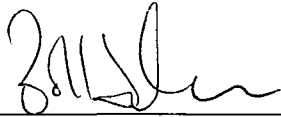
I refer to the tailings dam catastrophe in Brazil involving Vale S.A. and ask:

- (a) has the Minister seen video footage of the disaster;
- (b) how many tailings dams are there in Western Australia;
- (c) will the Minister provide a map of the tailings dams in Western Australia;
- (d) if no to (c), why not;
- (e) how often are inspections made of the tailings dams every year;
- (f) how many dams have been identified as having problems and will the Minister table the details;
- (g) what is the status of the Savannah nickel mine tailings dam in the Kimberley;
- (h) when was the Savannah nickel mine tailings dam last inspected;
- (i) have any problems been reported with the Savannah nickel mine tailings dam;
- (j) if yes to (i), will the Minister table the details;
- (k) if the Savannah nickel mine tailings dam wall were to fail, how many tonnes of tailings would be released; and
- (l) if the Savannah nickel mine tailings dam wall were to fail, where would the tailings and water go?

Answer

- (a) Yes
- (b) 492 of which 277 are active.
- (c) No.
- (d) Tailings dams are located at almost every ore processing project site.
- (e) Twice a year by the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (DMIRS) officers.
- (f) None.
- (g) It is currently an active Tailings Storage Facility (TSF) with tailings deposition ongoing.
- (h) 14 March 2019 as part of a scheduled inspection activity.
- (i) No TSF stability issues have been reported. A concern was raised regarding traffic management on the TSF.
- (j) Safety windrows along the TSF roadways were not of an adequate height. Directions were given to rectify this.
- (k) Approximately 0.5 million tonnes.

- (1) If Savannah tailings dam wall were to fail, tailings and water would flow into the water storage reservoir No. 1, which is located below the TSF. Some of the tailings may flow along the mine road below the dam and enter the workshop premises, or some may flow along the Mine Creek. It should be noted that the tailings dam also has a spillway as part of the design which is 3m below the crest of the main embankment allowing the discharge of any excess water from extreme rainfall away from mine infrastructure.



MINISTER FOR MINES AND PETROLEUM

8/4/19