

**Question Without Notice No. 330** asked in the **Legislative Council** on **2 April 2020** by **Hon ALISON XAMON**

Question directed to: **Mines and Petroleum**

Minister Responding: **Hon W.J. Johnston**

Parliament: **40** Session: **1**

## **CORONAVIRUS — FLY IN, FLY OUT WORKERS**

330. Hon ALISON XAMON to the minister representing the Minister for Mines and Petroleum:

**My question is on behalf of Hon Robin Chapple, who is away on urgent parliamentary business. I refer to fly in, fly out operations still in effect around Western Australia.**

(1) In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, does the minister intend to put restrictions around fly in, fly out and drive in, drive out workers, considering their ability to practise social distancing at work, and in transit to and from work, is limited?

(2) If yes to (1), what restrictions?

(3) Is the extractive mining sector considered an essential service by the government?

(4) Is the exploration sector of the mining industry considered an essential service by the government?

(5) Does the minister believe that the risk and potential scale of transmission of COVID-19 can be definitively mitigated if the FIFO arrangements are to continue?

**Hon DARREN WEST replied:**

On behalf of the Minister for Regional Development, I thank the member for some notice of the question. I wish the member well while he is away from the house on urgent parliamentary business. The following information has been provided to me by the Minister for Mines and Petroleum.

(1) The Western Australian social distancing restrictions that are in place for the community are applicable for fly in, fly out and drive in, drive out workers and are enforceable by the Western Australia Police Force.

(2) Sites are required to implement the isolation and distancing procedures mandated by the lead agencies—the Western Australian Department of Health and the Australian Department of Health.

(3)–(4) The McGowan government recognises the important part that mining and exploration plays in Australia and, in particular, Western Australia's economy, which can form a basis for the recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

(5) Yes. Based on the current public health advice and if sites are meeting their legislative requirements in relation to COVID-19, as outlined by the lead agencies.