

WATER — LICENCE FEES

1106. Hon COLIN TINCKNELL to the minister representing the Minister for Water:

Licences for water use in mining and agriculture often coexist in the same aquifers and river systems throughout Western Australia.

- (1) What are the minister's reasons for the introduction of a \$6 668 water licence renewal fee for miners but not at the same time applying the same fee to farmers often using the same water resource?
- (2) Is the minister using a divide-and-conquer strategy to apply this water tax grab?

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:

I thank the member for the question. The following information has been provided to me by the Minister for Water.

- (1)–(2) The May 2018 state budget introduced fees for the assessment of water licence and permit applications in the mining sector. The assessment fee to renew an existing 5C licence for the mining sector ranges from \$4 001 to \$6 668, depending on risk assessment level. In most cases, the renewed licence will be in place for 10 years. The government is of the view that the mining sector is in a position to bear the costs of undertaking the water licence and permit assessments and this is not a cost that should be borne by the Western Australian taxpayer. The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation is currently undertaking a consultation process with other sectors to determine whether cost recovery is appropriate in those sectors.