

MINING ACT — LAND EXPLORATION

5696. Mr K.M. O'Donnell to the Minister for Mines and Petroleum:

I refer to the requirements of the Mining Act 1978 (WA), that tenement holders must explore the land they hold, and I ask:

- (a) Does the Minister support the use it or lose it principle which is a widely accepted tenet of the resources sector from prospectors to mining giants;
- (b) As minimum expenditure obligations are designed to ensure tenement holders are genuine in their efforts to explore their ground, is the Minister aware of any 'landbanking' that is occurring and if so what is the estimated loss of revenue to the State as a result of this landbanking;
- (c) As there is currently no legislative provision preventing an applicant for a mining tenement from withdrawing the application and immediately lodging another application over the same ground, can the Minister advise if this has occurred over the past five years:
  - (i) If yes to (c) how many times has this occurred and at which tenements; and
- (d) Over the past five years how many complaints have been lodged over a tenement in the Warden's Court alleging the holder has not met its minimum expenditure obligations, requesting that the tenement be forfeited?

**Mr W.J. Johnston replied:**

- (a) Yes.
- (b) No.
- (c) The Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety is not aware of an application for an exploration licence being withdrawn and immediately replaced over exactly the same land by the same applicant.
  - (i) Not Applicable.
- (d) In the last five calendar years 1486 Applications For Forfeiture (Form 35A) have been lodged:
  - 2019 – 207
  - 2018 – 310
  - 2017 – 283
  - 2016 – 475
  - 2015 – 211