

WESTERN POWER — OUTAGES

**718. Hon COLIN de GRUSSA to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Energy:**

I apologise if my Esperance accent butchers any of the following community names!

I refer to the recent power blackouts, which are ongoing, in Quairading, South Quairading, Dangin, Wamenusking, Bulyee, Dulbelling, Badjaling, Balkuling, Pantapin, Aldersyde, Merredin and Yoting.

**Hon Sue Ellery:** Aren't you a member of the National Party?

**Hon COLIN de GRUSSA:** I have an Esperance accent!

- (1) Will Western Power undertake an internal review of why the predicted three-hour outage became a three-day outage; and, if so, when will this be completed?
- (2) Will an additional compensation payment, such as the payment made following the Christmas power outages in Perth, be provided?
- (3) Does Western Power have any policies around power pole repairs on wet ground; and, if so, when were these last updated, and can the minister please table a copy of the policy?
- (4) When were the poles in this region last assessed for maintenance requirements, and can the minister please table any recent maintenance records?

**Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN replied:**

I thank the member for some notice of the question. The following information has been provided to me by the Minister for Energy.

- (1) Western Power already has a program of works to improve its customer communications as part of its implementation of recommendations from the independent review of the Christmas outage. This outage will be a case study to incorporate lessons learnt. Western Power apologises for the frustration caused by the change in estimated restoration time and acknowledges that these estimates are an area for improvement. In this instance, until the crew discovered the extent of flooding and ground-stability issues, the reasonable estimate was a few hours of work for repairs. Once the complexity was discovered, extra crews from Perth and specialised equipment were deployed on Monday to help stabilise the area. Western Power also stood up an emergency management team in response to the outage.
- (2) In March this year, the state government increased the extended outage payment to \$120 for all eligible outages. Customers who experience an outage greater than 12 hours are eligible to apply for the \$120 extended outage payment for each eligible outage.
- (3) Western Power has a range of policies and procedures relevant to these repair works, including for the deployment and utilisation of specialised equipment that must be dispatched to site. Policy and procedure documents cannot be provided in the time given. The member is encouraged to put this part of the question on notice.
- (4) The most recent inspection of the affected section of line was completed in May 2022. More detailed maintenance records cannot be provided in the time given. The member is encouraged to put this part of the question on notice.