

BROWSE LNG PROJECT —  
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AUTHORITY BOARD VOTE

**459. Hon SALLY TALBOT to the minister representing the Minister for Environment:**

I refer to the Environmental Protection Authority assessment of the Browse gas hub project.

- (1) Were disclosures of interest by EPA board members Chris Whitaker, Denis Glennon, Rod Lukatelich and Elizabeth Carr in relation to the Browse assessment made under section 12(1) or section 12(3) of the Environmental Protection Act?
- (2) What was the date of the meeting at which each disclosure was recorded in the minutes of the proceedings of that meeting?
- (3) Who presided at each of these meetings?
- (4) Who is recorded as attending each of the four inquorate meetings at which the Browse gas hub project was considered or discussed?
- (5) Who presided at each of these meetings?
- (6) Did the minister or the authority consider using sections 19, 24 or 25, or any other section of the EP Act, to make use of the services of any other officers, employees, agencies or instrumentalities in relation to its powers and duties to carry out the Browse assessment; and, if not, why not?

**Hon HELEN MORTON replied:**

I thank the member for some notice of this question. The Office of the Environmental Protection Authority has advised —

- (1) Chris Whitaker, Denis Glennon and Rod Lukatelich disclosed interests under section 12(1) of the Environmental Protection Act 1986. Elizabeth Carr disclosed an interest in accordance with the EPA code of conduct because of a perceived conflict of interest due to her previous employment.
- (2) The dates on which members first disclosed their interests are as follows: Chris Whitaker, 1/10/09; Denis Glennon, 26/10/11; Rod Lukatelich, 26/11/09; Elizabeth Carr, 26/10/11. The EPA chairman determined that the members could participate in the discussions up to 16 February 2012.
- (3) The person presiding at each of these meetings is as follows: 1/10/09, Paul Vogel; 26/10/11, Paul Vogel; 26/11/09, Paul Vogel; 26/10/11, Paul Vogel.
- (4) The persons recorded as attending are as follows: 1/3/12, Paul Vogel, Chris Whitaker, Rod Lukatelich, Denis Glennon and Elizabeth Carr; however, Chris Whitaker, Rod Lukatelich, Denis Glennon and Elizabeth Carr excluded themselves from the agenda item associated with the assessment of the Browse LNG precinct. 2/3/12, Paul Vogel; 14/5/12, Paul Vogel; 20/6/12, Paul Vogel.
- (5) Paul Vogel presided at each meeting.
- (6) I have been advised that the authority did not specifically use sections 19, 24 or 25 of the Environmental Protection Act. In accordance with normal procedures, the authority has used section 24 informally to receive advice from a number of government departments—Office of the EPA, and Departments of Environment and Conservation, Water, Fisheries and Indigenous Affairs—independent expert reviews, and various technical reports. I remind the member that the EPA is an independent statutory body and cannot be directed by the Minister for Environment. The EPA chairman stated yesterday that —

... the trust of the community, the trust of Government in what we do, ... is why we have an independent EPA. ... It's a very, very strong model that has been lauded both nationally and internationally as one of the world's best.