

WATER — LICENCE FEES

1176. Hon COLIN TINCKNELL to the minister representing the Minister for Water:

I refer to water licence fees imposed on the mining industry in Western Australia last week, and proposed for agriculture. In Queensland, the application fee for a water licence is \$130.30 and there are no licence renewal fees as the licence is perpetual.

- (1) When compared with the system in Queensland, does the minister think it is fair that miners and farmers in Western Australia pay an application fee of \$8 929 for a water licence and \$6 668 to renew a water licence every 10 years?
- (2) Will the minister explain why the McGowan government's approach to the mineral and food production industries in Western Australia is to add costs that do not apply to competitors in Queensland, which are also under a Labor government?

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:

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

- (1)–(2) No decision has been made to introduce a water licence fee in the agricultural sector. A water licence fee was recently introduced for water licence permits and applications in the mining sector. This fee will recover the costs incurred by the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation undertaking assessment of water licence and permit applications in this sector. It is fair that the mining sector covers the cost of this service and it is not left to taxpayers. Prior to the introduction of this fee, Western Australia was the only state in the commonwealth where water licence holders made no contribution to the water licensing system. Fees vary across Australia and in many states a volumetric charge is applied based on water use. This is not being considered in Western Australia.