

FIMISTON TAILINGS DAMS — SEEPAGE

6020. Hon Paul Llewellyn to the Parliamentary Secretary representing the Minister for the Environment

I refer to appeal No. 99/134 by Kalgoorlie Consolidated Gold Mines (KCGM), a briefing note to the Minister for the Environment dated 2 December 1999 signed by Dr Bryan Jenkins, Chief Executive Officer, Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), which may exist on files, and a letter dated 20 January 2000 signed by Cheryl Edwardes MLA, Minister for the Environment addressed to Mt John Shipp, General Manager, Kalgoorlie Consolidated Gold Mines Pty Ltd, and I ask —

- (1) Can the Minister confirm that part of this briefing note dated 2 December 1999 states, ‘There is an ongoing concern about seepage from the Fimiston tailings storage facilities (TSF’s). It has been identified that groundwater levels around the vicinity of the TSF’s are elevated due to KCGM’s operation. This matter has been raised many times by the holder of an adjacent Prospecting licence (Optimum Resources Pty Ltd) who have been concerned about KCGM operations for a number of years. As a result of investigations, KCGM have been requested by the DEP to achieve a measurable reduction in groundwater levels prior to 31 December 1999. Ongoing groundwater monitoring is required by KCGM to allow it to demonstrate that this objective is likely to be achieved.’?
- (2) Can the Minister state why KCGM was appealing its licence that was issued in September 1999?
- (3) If no to (2), why not?
- (4) Can the Minister quote the full text of the Licence conditions W2 and W10 that was issued on 28 September 1999 by the Department of Environment (DOE) to KCGM?
- (5) If no to (4), why not?
- (6) Is it correct that part of the briefing note dated 2 December 1999 states, ‘The intent of this condition is to highlight the significant issues of concern and act to prevent surface or ground water being contaminated and vegetation being damaged. Considering complaints related to seepage and vegetation damage have been received for this premises it is considered prudent to leave this condition as it is. The condition is applied to a large number of other licensed premises with concern or appeals. Subsequent to the appeal being received, KCGM representatives met officers of the Goldfields Region office of the DEP on 17 November 1999 and advised that the condition as currently stated in its licence was acceptable.’?
- (7) If no to (6), will the Minister quote the full text from the briefing note dated 2 December 1999?
- (8) Can the Minister state what was the outcome of the appeal No. 99/134 lodged by KCGM?
- (9) If no to (8), why not?
- (10) Will the Minister table copies of the briefing note to the Minister for the Environment dated 2 December 1999 signed by Dr Bryan Jenkins, Chief Executive Officer, DEP which may exist on files, and also a letter dated 20 January 2000 signed by Cheryl Edwardes MLA, Minister for the Environment addressed to Mr John Shipp, General Manager, KCGM?
- (11) If no to (10), why not?

Hon SALLY TALBOT replied:

- (1)-(7) The Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) has advised that the information to which the questions refer has been archived. The period in question is more than eight years ago, and the Minister does not support DEC spending the substantial amount of time and resources it would take to locate this information.
- (8) The appeal was dismissed by the then Minister. Information relating to the appeal is available from the Office of the Appeals Convenor or from its website at www.appealsconvenor.wa.gov.au.
- (9) Not applicable.
- (10)-(11)
See the answer to (1).