

INPEX BROWSE LTD — LIQUEFIED NATURAL GAS PLANT, MARET ISLANDS

6083. Hon Giz Watson to the Parliamentary Secretary representing the Minister for the Environment

Japanese-owned INPEX Browse Ltd (INPEX) is proposing to establish a 12 million tonne per annum liquefied natural gas plant on the Maret Islands on the North-West Kimberley Coast. On or about 4 May 2006, the Office of Development Approvals Coordinator referred the 'Ichthys gas-condensate field development Maret Islands in the Bonaparte Archipelago off the Kimberley Coast' (INPEX Kimberley Coast LNG Development) to the Department of Environmental Protection (EPA). On or about 18 May 2006, the EPA recommended that the environmental assessment for the INPEX Kimberley Coast LNG Development be set at the level of Environmental Review and Management Programme (ERMP). The Minister and Government has made much of the rigorous environmental scrutiny to which the INPEX Kimberley Coast LNG Development will be subject, and I ask —

- (1) When does the Minister believe the conclusion of all State and Federal environment legislative requirements will be satisfied in respect of the INPEX Kimberley Coast LNG Development?
- (2) Once the State and Federal departmental or authority environment evaluations are concluded, will the minister outline legislative procedures to be followed subsequent to the release of those bulletins or draft reports?
- (3) Once the procedures outlined in answer to question 2 are finalised, what role does the Minister have in determining if the project should proceed or not?
- (4) Is advice or consideration by Cabinet included in the Minister's final decision?

Hon SALLY TALBOT replied:

- (1) It is not yet possible to predict when all State and Federal environmental legislative requirements for the INPEX LNG proposal will be concluded because the proponent has not yet submitted its finalised environmental documentation for public review.
- (2) Once advice has been provided by all relevant departments and authorities, including the EPA, all the procedures that are mandated by the relevant environmental and other statutes will be followed.
- (3) The Minister for the Environment has a decision to make on whether or not a proposal may be implemented, under section 45 of the Environmental Protection Act 1986.
- (4) Section 45 of the Environmental Protection Act requires that the Minister for the Environment consult with other Ministers who are decision making authorities and if possible agree with them on whether or not a proposal may be implemented and if so, to what conditions the implementation should be subject. If the Minister cannot agree with other decision making Ministers, section 45(2) of the Act requires that the Minister refer the matters in dispute to the Governor for his decision.