

ESPERANCE POWER PROJECT

**1075. Hon COLIN de GRUSSA to the minister representing the Minister for Energy:**

I refer to the proposal by Contract Power Australia to construct a gas-fired power station for the supply of electricity to Esperance under contract to Horizon Power.

- (1) Why was the decision made to locate the power station within the Esperance town site, in close proximity to residences, playgrounds and sporting fields?
- (2) Were any other sites considered, including the Shark Lake Industrial Park?
- (3) Given that CPA has elected to truck gas to Esperance rather than use the existing gas pipeline —
  - (a) was the potential for the withdrawal of the Esperance Gas Distribution Company from the market considered by Horizon Power in awarding the power supply contract to CPA;
  - (b) what actions will the government take to support current customers of reticulated gas in the event that the Esperance Gas Distribution Company withdraws from the market; and
  - (c) has the minister been briefed on the potential cost to Esperance customers in transitioning from reticulated gas to bottled gas?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:**

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

- (1) The decision to locate the power station on industrially zoned land was based on the Shire of Esperance's town planning scheme 23, and proximity to Horizon Power's Esperance Harbour Road substation.
- (2) Yes, multiple sites were considered, including the Shark Lake Industrial Park.
- (3) The decision to truck LNG was a commercial decision made by Horizon Power, not by Contract Power Australia.
  - (a) This is a commercial decision for the Esperance Gas Distribution Company.
  - (b) The government is keen to ensure that the private operators of the gas distribution network, who have profited from their Esperance business for many years, do not turn their backs on the community.
  - (c) Yes.