

EDUCATION AND TRAINING — ASBESTOS — MERREDIN

2131. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Minister for Education and Training:

I refer to the Sunday Times article, “Asbestos hazard: Parts of Merredin College to be fenced off”, published 14 April 2019, and I ask:

- (a) what was the asbestos risk rating at Merredin College and Merredin Residential College during the period 1 January 2017 to present identifying the date and reason for change in classification;
- (b) please table any reports or advice received by or prepared for the Department of Education with respect to asbestos risk at both sites;
- (c) has a health risk assessment been undertaken at either site and, if not, why not;
- (d) if yes to (c), please provide copies of the assessment reports;
- (e) why has remediation been delayed until April 2019, when the asbestos risk was known as early as October 2017;
- (f) what is the cost of remediation works at either site to date and what is the expected costs to fully remediate the sites; and
- (g) which other State schools are listed on the State’s Contaminated Sites Database and for each school please identify the relevant contamination?

Hon Sue Ellery replied:

- (a) The initial Greencap report of January 2018 (Preliminary Site Investigation) did not provide a risk rating for Merredin College or Merredin Residential College. The report included test results that identified asbestos in soils was below levels identified in the health guidelines for a school site.

The ACM surface investigation undertaken by Talis in May 2019 assessed the ACM in soil as low risk, with all the results below the adopted Department of Health guideline values.

- (b) The following reports are provided:
 - (1) Assessment of Asbestos in Soil, Eastern Quadrangle, SLR report (23 Nov 2012)
 - (2) Greencap – Preliminary Site Investigation Merredin College (January 2018)
 - (3) Greencap – Preliminary Site Investigation Merredin Residential College (February 2018)
 - (4) Greencap – Limited Site Investigation and Remediation report Merredin College (February 2018 with revision provided May 2019)
 - (5) Greencap – Remediation of Surficial Contamination at Merredin Residential College letter (February 2018, with revision provided May 2019)
 - (6) Talis – ACM Surface Investigation Merredin College (May 2019)
 - (7) Talis – ACM Surface Investigation Merredin Residential College (May 2019)

The Greencap reports listed at (4) and (5) above had to be revised by Greencap as an error was identified in the calculation of the amount of asbestos-containing material present in the soil, which incorrectly identified the amount as being above the Department of Health (2009) *Guidelines for Assessment Remediation and Management of Asbestos-Contaminated Sites in Western Australia for ACM* for residential land use. The Department has been working with Greencap to address the error in a format that will be acceptable to the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) and Department of Health. The updated reports were received on 28 May 2019 and have been sent to DWER. [See tabled paper no 2814.]

- (c) No. The requirement for a human health risk assessment has not been recommended by the independent environmental consultants or DWER.
- (d) Not applicable.
- (e) The Department has undertaken a staged remediation, with a detailed surface pick undertaken in November/December 2017; a limited surface pick undertaken in October 2018; and a detailed surface pick undertaken again in April 2019. These are referred to in the reports provided. For unused parts of the sites, fences have been installed to restrict access.
- (f) Remediation and investigation cost to date:

Merredin College	\$74 964
Merredin Residential College	\$46 321

Total expected costs for the remediation of both sites is still to be determined.

- (g) Eight school sites have been classified and are on the DWER Contaminated Sites Database.
- West Midland/Woodbridge Primary School (residual pockets of heavy metals in soil). The site has been remediated and a Site Management Plan is being finalised.
- Capel Primary School (shared use school oval historically used as a land fill for mineral tailings from mining). The site has been remediated and a Site Management Plan is being finalised.
- Hollywood Primary School, Nedlands (lead-impacted soil and debris, including glass, ceramic and brick present, beneath a geotextile warning barrier). The site has been remediated and a Site Management Plan is being finalised.
- Gooseberry Hill Primary School (asbestos fragments in soil). The site has been remediated and a Site Management Plan is in place.
- Wembley Downs Primary School (asbestos fragments in soil). The site has been remediated and a Site Management Plan has been sent to DWER for endorsement.
- Merredin Residential College (asbestos fragments in soil). All updated reports have been sent to DWER and the Department is awaiting classification from DWER.
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- Wongan Hills District High (residual transformer oil at depth from a transformer leak). The impacted area has been remediated. No further action required.