

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AUTHORITY — GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS —  
BRIEFING NOTES

**677. Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:**

I refer to the Environmental Protection Authority's proposal to apply its own guidelines to projects that would require the EPA to recommend 100 per cent offsets for greenhouse gas emissions on projects that are expected to emit more than 100 000 tonnes of scope 1 carbon dioxide-equivalent greenhouse gases per annum, and tabled paper 2783, tabled by the Minister for Environment on 13 June 2019.

- (1) Was the Premier or any of his ministerial staff or any person in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet or the department of state development given a copy of briefing note DWERME572/19, or the indicative offsets costs attachment, prior to the EPA announcement of the guidelines policy on 7 March 2019?
- (2) If yes to (1), on what date?
- (3) Was the Premier or any person in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet or the department of state development given this information after the 7 March announcement by the EPA?
- (4) If yes to (3), on what date?

**Hon SUE ELLERY replied:**

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question and remind him that the Environmental Protection Authority's greenhouse gas guidelines have been withdrawn. I also remind the honourable member that the EPA is an independent statutory authority and that this independence is important and something this government respects fully. The government does not direct the EPA. As the member will know, the primary role of the EPA is to provide advice to government on the environmental impacts of significant projects. Ultimately, the government is the decision-maker and gives final consideration to the benefits of a project.

The briefing note by the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, to which this question refers, related to a draft version of the EPA's greenhouse gas guidance. I understand that the EPA's position on greenhouse gas guidance changed considerably over the months prior to its release and that details contained within the draft EPA greenhouse gas guidance were not finalised until the date of their release on 7 March 2019. My office was not provided with the finalised guidance until less than one hour before it was published publicly.

This government will continue to consult cooperatively with stakeholders on measures to reduce emissions. We are fully committed to supporting jobs and growth in Western Australia, while responsibly protecting the environment for future generations.

- (1) Yes.
- (2) It was on 27 February 2019.
- (3) Not applicable. The information was provided prior to the announcement.
- (4) Not applicable.