

ADITYA BIRLA MINERALS — NIFTY COPPER MINE

**539. Hon KATE DOUST to the minister representing the Minister for Mines and Petroleum:**

I refer to the prohibition notice issued by the Department of Mines and Petroleum on the Aditya Birla Minerals Nifty Copper Mine following the development of a sinkhole in March 2014.

- (1) Did the Department of Mines and Petroleum inspect the mine prior to lifting the prohibition notice and the reopening of the mine?
- (2) If yes to (1), what test and audits did the Department of Mines and Petroleum carry out prior to lifting the prohibition notice and the reopening of the mine?
- (3) What tests and risk assessments were carried out by Aditya Birla Minerals that contributed to the Department of Mines and Petroleum lifting the prohibition notice and the reopening of the mine?
- (4) Did the department place any conditions on Aditya Birla Minerals prior to lifting the prohibition notice and the reopening of the mine?
- (5) If yes to (4), what were they and has the Aditya Birla Minerals fully complied with the conditions placed on them?

**Hon KEN BASTON replied:**

I thank the honourable member for some notice of this question. The Department of Mines and Petroleum advises as follows —

- (1)–(3) The mine was inspected by DMP post development of the sinkhole. The following reports were considered as part of reopening the mine. A report titled “Birla Nifty Copper Operations, Risk Assessment and Hazard Control Report” dated 2 May 2014; a “Risk Assessment Record/Risk Reduction Plan” dated 23 April 2014; a geotechnical “Nifty Mine Sinkhole Investigation” report dated 26 March 2014; a report titled “Birla Nifty Copper Operations, Summary on Operational Start up Activities” dated 2 July 2014; and a report titled “Birla Nifty Copper Operations, Resumption of Mining Activities at Birla Nifty Copper Mine” dated 26 June 2014. Presentations were made by Birla Nifty Pty Ltd on 10 June and 26 June 2014 to DMP regarding the progress made on the actions required as per the prohibition notice.
- (4) Yes.
- (5) (a) An investigation by an experienced geotechnical expert is to be undertaken to establish the cause of the sinkhole and any safety implications from the sinkhole which may affect underground mining operations. The prohibition notice stated that a team-based suitable and sufficient risk assessment is to be undertaken to manage safety risks associated with the sinkhole. Adequate controls identified in the risk assessment are to be implemented before the resumption of underground mining operations.’  
(b) Yes.