

EMPIRE OIL AND GAS NL — EXPLORATION PERMIT 389

602. Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE to the minister representing the Minister for Mines and Petroleum:

I refer to exploration permit 389 held by Empire Oil and Gas NL.

- (1) Will the minister please identify all wells that have been drilled within EP 389 and any relevant departmental approvals granted?
- (2) Is it a condition of departmental approval that independent water quality testing be undertaken within the permit area?
- (3) If yes to (2), what are the conditions on which the independent water testing is based?
- (4) Is the Department of Mines and Petroleum provided with access to the water quality testing results; and, if it is, will the minister table all relevant results relating to EP 389?
- (5) Is it normally a condition for onshore petroleum and geothermal approvals that independent water testing take place?

Hon KEN BASTON replied:

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

- (1) Empire Oil Company (WA) Ltd has drilled four wells in EP 389. These are Gingin West-1, Red Gully-1, Gingin-3 and Eclipse-1. All wells were approved under the provisions of the Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Resources Act 1967.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) The Department of Mines and Petroleum directed Empire Oil to develop and implement a groundwater sampling and analysis program to establish that, over time, there was no risk to groundwater from hydrocarbon contaminated materials arising from the petroleum activity.
- (4) Yes, the Department of Mines and Petroleum is provided with access to water quality monitoring results. The minister cannot release this information as it is considered confidential under section 112(4) of the Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Resources Act 1967.
- (5) The requirement to undertake independent water testing is determined on a case-by-case basis and depends on the risks that an activity poses to the environment.