

UNFENCED ABANDONED MINING SHAFTS

847. Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE to the minister representing the Minister for Mines and Petroleum:

I refer to the answer to my question without notice 403 asked in the Legislative Council on Wednesday, 9 April 2014, by the minister representing the Minister for Mines and Petroleum.

- (1) Regarding the answer to (2), will the minister define “very high risk sites”?
- (2) Regarding the answer to (6), has the minister reassessed the risk rating for the legacy sites and prioritised them accordingly for rehabilitation action?
- (3) If yes to (2), will the minister provide a list of sites?
- (4) If no to (3), why not?
- (5) If no to (2), why not?
- (6) If no to (2), when will this occur?

Hon KEN BASTON replied:

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

- (1) The inventory of abandoned mine features that has been established by the Department of Mines and Petroleum, considers risk primarily due to safety concerns. The only sites addressed by the government have been those posing an immediate and serious threat to human life, which may be considered to be the definition of “very high risk”.
- (2) No.
- (3) Not applicable.
- (4) Not applicable.
- (5) Interest generated from the mining rehabilitation fund will provide the state government with the funds to begin addressing abandoned mine features across Western Australia. This work, and the prioritisation of sites to be rehabilitated, will be overseen by the MRF advisory panel. The panel will be informed by an abandoned mines policy, which is currently being developed by DMP. The policy will include criteria to assist with prioritisation, which will include environmental, cultural, ecological and heritage values as well as safety issues.
- (6) A draft policy will be available for public consultation early in 2015. Following adoption of the finalised policy, DMP will then undertake the reassessment and prioritisation of documented abandoned mine features.