

URANIUM LEVEL IN WATER SUPPLIES

5396. Hon Robin Chapple to the Minister for Finance representing the Minister for Housing

With regard to the issue of uranium levels in water supplies at the Pargurr and Yandeyarra communities, and with particular reference to the list of priority water projects and indicative cost estimates in relation to Indigenous Remote Community water supplies tabled by the Department of Housing at the Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations hearing on 14 June 2011. The paper indicated that works were required at Pargurr and Yandeyarra to 'remove uranium and meet Australian Drinking Water Guidelines', I ask —

- (1) What progress has been made on these works?
- (2) When does the Government expect these works will be completed?
- (3) What are current uranium levels in the water supplies at these communities?
- (4) Are interim arrangements in place to provide safe drinking water at these communities?
- (5) If yes to (4), what are these arrangements?
- (6) Is the Minister aware of other communities with uranium in the water supply?
- (7) If yes to (6), please table a list.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN replied:

The Department of Housing advises:

- (1) The Department has completed the installation of a water treatment facility at the Yandeyarra community.

An appropriate treatment facility for Pargurr has been procured and delivered to the Department's contractor in Port Hedland, for installation to be completed in the near future.
- (2) The works in Yandeyarra have been completed and it is estimated that the treatment facility for Pargurr will be commissioned in June 2012.
- (3) Yandeyarra — 0.028mg/l as of 23.02.2012. The mean average from 2008 to 2012 was 0.031mg/l.
Pargurr — 0.015mg/l as of 16.01.2012. The mean average from 2006 to 2012 was 0.024mg/l.
The current requirement under the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines (ADWG) is currently 0.017mg/l.
- (4) Through discussions with the Advisory Committee on Purity of Water and the Department of Health there was no additional requirement for the Department of Housing to provide an alternative water supply to these communities.
- (5) No alternative water supply arrangements were required.
- (6) No other communities are known to have uranium levels above the current levels specified under the ADWG.
- (7) Not applicable