

THUNDERBOX GOLD MINE — DUST EMISSIONS

359. Hon Robin Chapple to the Minister for Agriculture and Food representing the Minister for Mines and Petroleum:

I refer to the photos of dust at <http://www.robinchapple.com/sites/default/files/2013-10-09%20ThunderBox%20Dust.pdf> emanating from the Thunderbox Gold Mine on 9 October 2013, and I ask:

- (a) why did this fugitive dust emission eventuate;
- (b) what was the source of the fugitive dust emission;
- (c) was this fugitive dust emission incident reported to the Department of Mines and Petroleum;
- (d) if no to , why not;
- (e) is there a condition contained within the licence condition for the Thunderbox mine that seeks to prevent such a fugitive dust emission;
- (f) if no to (e), why not;
- (g) if yes to (e), will the Minister table the licence; and
- (h) if yes to (e), what actions are available to the Minister to prosecute or cause the Thunderbox Mine to cease such fugitive dust emissions?

Hon Ken Baston replied:

The Department of Mines and Petroleum advises:

- (a) Officers from the Department of Mines and Petroleum (DMP) have reviewed the photographs. While DMP's investigation into this matter is continuing, the officers consider that the dust emissions were likely to be the result of high winds passing over exposed tailings which have low moisture content at the mine site.
- (b) The investigating officers of DMP consider that the dust was generated from a tailings storage facility on the mine site.
- (c) Yes
- (d) Not applicable
- (e) Yes. Condition 26 of Mining Lease 36/512.
- (f) Not applicable
- (g) An extract of the applicable conditions of the tenement is attached [See paper 977.]
- (h) The investigation of the incident is continuing and DMP will consider the appropriate enforcement or prosecution action following the completion of the investigation. The *Mining Act 1978* provides powers to issue administrative directions where there is a risk of environment harm, and provides for fines, or forfeiture to be considered for breaches of tenement conditions.