

HYDRAULIC FRACTURING — WA LABOR ELECTION COMMITMENT

1227. Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:

I refer to the Australian Labor Party's 2016 election commitment that fracking would not be allowed in WA if it "contributed adversely to climate change".

- (1) Will the Premier uphold this election commitment and not allow fracking in WA?
- (2) Will the Premier explain how the fracking inquiry included the full analysis of life-cycle greenhouse gas emissions prior to any fracking activity, including future exploration?
- (3) Will the Premier explain how the fracking inquiry demonstrated that fracking will not compromise the environment, groundwater or public health, or contribute adversely to climate change?
- (4) If no to (1), (2) and/or (3), does the Premier agree that he misled the people of WA in his election commitment?

The PRESIDENT: Leader of the House, I am not sure you need to answer that last part of the question.

Hon Nick Goiran interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Member! I was speaking; you were not.

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (1)–(4) The government committed at the election to impose a ban on fracking in the south west, Perth metropolitan and Peel regions, and to a moratorium across the remainder of the state until such time as a scientific inquiry could be held on the safety and environmental impacts of hydraulic fracturing. The Premier assumes that the quote used in the preamble of the honourable member's question comes from his letter to the Conservation Council of WA. If that is indeed the case, the honourable member has taken the quote out of context. The full quote reads —

WA Labor will place a moratorium on the use of fracking until such an inquiry can demonstrate that fracking will not compromise the environment, groundwater, public health or contribute adversely to climate change.

That inquiry has now been done. The inquiry has found that the risks from hydraulic fracturing in Western Australia are low and can be lower still if the inquiry's recommendations are adopted. Accordingly, we have adopted all 44 recommendations. Even on a full life-cycle basis, the emissions from unconventional gas are only marginally higher than those of conventional gas, and are still far lower than current energy sources of coal or diesel used in communities throughout WA. The conducting of this inquiry and the government's response on this issue are entirely consistent in detail and spirit with our election commitment.