

COMPOSTING FACILITY — OAKFORD

525. Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE to the Minister for Environment:

I refer to the ongoing operations of Bio-Organics in Oakford and the minister's claims that the site is under investigation.

- (1) Is the minister aware of claims that Department of Environment Regulation officers are being threatened by Bio-Organics?
- (2) Why will the DER not ensure that the community is made aware of the chemical composition and source of the waste liquids being received at the site?
- (3) Why is the site still receiving toxic liquids containing arsenic, cadmium, chromium and lead?

Mr A.P. JACOB replied:

- (1)–(3) I certainly acknowledge that this is a very significant issue. Indeed, in all my discussions with the Department of Environment Regulation I have requested, and continue to request, that it ensure that it makes this matter a very high priority. In response to a grievance I received in this house late last year, the licence for that particular facility has been amended, so there is already a significant reduction in the intake onto that site. As a result, there have been ongoing actions with that particular operator. There was a move to look at suspending and, ultimately, revoking that particular individual's licence. Under the Environmental Protection Act, and as a matter of procedural fairness, a licensed operator holds a degree of rights under that licence and has the ability to put in a submission on a notice of revocation of their licence. That has happened just within the last couple of weeks, and I would expect that the CEO of the Department of Environment Regulation will make a decision very shortly on the licence for Bio-Organics.