

ESPERANCE PORT AUTHORITY — IMPORTED BULK FERTILISERS

100. Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What is the manganese and zinc content—that is, concentration—of imported bulk fertilisers handled by Esperance Port Authority?
- (2) How are bulk fertilisers handled at the port of Esperance?
- (3) Is the handling of this material subject to a part V licence or any other regulatory controls?
- (4) Is the material transported to its destination through the Esperance townsite?
- (5) If yes to (4), what is the transport route?
- (6) How is any bulk fertiliser spillage monitored, and by what authority?

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question. The details that I will give are current as at the date of notice, which is 2 March, but I do not think they will have changed at all since that time, given the nature of them.

- (1) Both manganese and zinc concentrations are well below one per cent according to the material safety data sheets provided by the various importers.
- (2) The handling of fertilisers is always contracted out by fertiliser importing companies to independent stevedores. The port provides only labour. Spill trays to contain any minor leaks from grab operations are provided by the port. The independent stevedores provide receiving hoppers, grabs and trimming machinery. Throughput of granular fertilisers has dropped over the past few years as liquid fertilisers have become popular. In the 2008–09 financial year, the port handled more than 75 000 tonnes of fertiliser. From July 2009 to date, the port has handled 18 000 tonnes. Summit Fertilizer's facility is located inside the port and manages the distribution of the fertiliser. Facilities for Ravensdown and Co-operative Bulk Handling are located outside the port.
- (3) This product is not covered by the port's environmental licence. However, the port maintains a very high level of operational hygiene, and the fertiliser companies remove any waste from the port for consolidation with their other inventory. This requires that the fertiliser waste is not contaminated with other products.
- (4) Yes.
- (5) The material is transported along Harbour Road, which acts as the local ring road. In addition, no fertiliser moves out of the port between 11.30 pm and 5.30 am unless the importer negotiates with the port beforehand.
- (6) Berths and surfaces are cleaned up before, during and after operations. All fertiliser companies collect and remove waste as part of their responsibility. The stevedoring company inspects the facilities for cleanliness before a ship berths and operations commence. After operations have been completed, all residue on the berth and landside surfaces is cleaned. The collected waste is then removed by the fertiliser company. Trucks are covered with tarpaulins before they leave the berth. The port monitors nutrients in the waste water treatment plant and stormwater systems to ensure that no untracked fertiliser remains within the port. A report is sent to the Department of Environment and Conservation every month.