

ENVIRONMENT — NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (AIR TOXICS) MEASURE

784. Hon Dr Brad Pettitt to the minister representing the Minister for Environment:

I refer to question on notice 720 asked on 10 May 2022, and I ask:

- (a) how frequently are the “targeted air quality investigations” carried out to confirm compliance with the National Environmental Protection (Air Toxics) Measure;
- (b) when were the most recent “targeted air quality investigations” of air toxics in Western Australia carried out;
- (c) where are the results of these “targeted air quality investigations” available; and
- (d) when is the next set of “targeted air quality investigations” planned to be conducted?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

- (a) Targeted ambient air quality investigations are conducted for various reasons including responding to community / local government requests, regulatory investigations by the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, or as part of the Department’s ongoing surveillance monitoring program. There is no set frequency for these investigations.

In recent years, targeted ambient air quality investigations have focussed on a wider range of air pollutants, including volatile organic compounds, ammonia and those covered by the National Environment Protection (Ambient Air Quality) Measure (AAQ NEPM). The reason for this is that exceedances of AAQ NEPM standards have been measured in Western Australia, whereas all measured concentrations of National Environment Protection (Air Toxics) Measure (Air Toxics NEPM) pollutants have been significantly below the monitoring investigation levels.

The goal of the Air Toxics NEPM (made in 2004) was to improve the information base regarding ambient air toxics within the Australian environment (with a focus on locations where significantly elevated concentrations of air toxics are likely to occur), in order to facilitate the development of standards.

- (b) The most recent targeted air quality investigation of air toxics in Western Australia concluded in 2014, as part of the *Kwinana Background Air Quality Study Phase 4*. This Phase 4 study confirmed the results from the three previous phases (2005–2006, 2007–2008 and 2009–2010) that found the levels of detected target pollutants to be low and below the air quality criteria.
- (c) The report on the *Kwinana Background Air Quality Study Phase 4*, as well as reports on earlier investigations, is available on the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation website.
- (d) No targeted air quality investigations for Air Toxics NEPM pollutants are currently planned.