

WESTERN POWER — POWER CONNECTIONS

864. Dr D.J. Honey to the Minister for Energy:

I refer the Minister to reports that Western Power needs up to a year to complete work related to approvals for power connections for new developments, work which industry claims used to take about 12 weeks, and I ask:

- (a) Is the Minister aware of the serious problems Western Power is creating for development projects requiring power connections;
- (b) What are the principal causes of the delays in the approvals for such connections; and
- (c) Other than looking to recruit more people in the midst of a tight labour market, has the Minister considered any other options to reduce waiting times, such as sub-contracting the task to private sector expertise, and if not, why not?

Mr W.J. Johnston replied:

- (a) I am aware that Western Power is facing constraints in meeting distribution customer delivery expectations.
- (b) Constraints are driven by an increase in market demand for construction and design services, as well as supply chain constraints.
- (c) Western Power's actions to improve delivery timeframes include increasing resourcing and reviewing its design operating model to increase outsourcing options. Western Power has also worked with industry bodies to implement process improvements, increased levels of stock holdings to counteract long lead times for certain items and invested in a dedicated project portal for customers to log, track, and access the status of their project, provide information, and ask questions.