

PUMPED HYDRO — COLLIE

424. Dr D.J. HONEY to the Minister for Energy:

I have a supplementary question. Can the minister reassure Western Australians that taxpayers will not ultimately be picking up the \$1 billion-plus remediation cost for those disused pits?

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON replied:

This is the thing about the member for Cottesloe. He comes up with these stupid things. I have never heard anybody suggest that there is a billion-dollar liability. I have never had anybody say that. Where did the member get that information? Who gave that to him?

Dr D.J. Honey: It's published. I'll send you the reference.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: He sits there and invents a figure that no-one has ever said, and now he cannot tell me the source. Who is the source?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, please, members!

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Who is the source? The member talks about accountability and openness. All we want to know is the name of the organisation that gave him the estimate, not of a billion dollars, but apparently \$1.2 billion. He sits there. He knows who told him that figure, but he will not share it, even with his own colleagues. Not even his own colleagues are worth it. He will not share that information with anybody. What an embarrassment! I can tell you this, member: one of the current mining companies down there has an estimated cost of \$40 million.

Dr D.J. Honey: For that whole site? You're joking!

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I am telling the member what it says. I am not saying it is accurate.

Dr D.J. Honey: As the minister for mines, you should check it out.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I am sorry. This is the problem with you. Firstly, you asked the Minister for Energy, not the Minister for Mines and Petroleum. The Minister for Mines and Petroleum's responsibilities are enlivened when the state agreement ceases, not prior to the cessation of the state agreement. You worked for Alcoa. Alcoa is covered by a state agreement. Surely you know that. You were a senior executive of Alcoa. Are you telling me that you did not know that your business was regulated by the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade, not the Minister for Mines and Petroleum? How silly are you?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members! That concludes question time.