

AIR QUALITY — NEWMAN

**266. Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Environment:**

I refer to last week's ABC report that revealed that air quality targets in Newman had been exceeded 171 times since 2013, with two local BHP mines identified as the dominant source of dust by the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation's own review. I also refer to the freedom of information documents that show DWER intended to align Newman's air quality target with national standards, but later abandoned this plan after BHP contested.

- (1) Why is the state government not enforcing air quality standards in line with the national environment protection measures in relation to dust in Newman?
- (2) Will the state government commit to commencing a study of the potential health impacts that iron ore dust pollution may have on local residents?
- (3) What is the state government's response to the concerns of the 82 per cent of Newman residents who say they have experienced adverse health impacts due to dust and want national air pollution standards applied in Newman?

**Hon DARREN WEST replied:**

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. On behalf of the Minister for Environment I provide the following answer.

- (1) The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation's reviews took into account advice from the Department of Health on appropriate health standards. The Department of Health supports the application of an interim air guideline value of 70 milligrams—I think it is milligrams—per cubic metre in Newman. The member might just want to check that I have the right measure.
- (2) This is a matter for the Minister for Health and the Department of Health to respond to.
- (3) The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation considered the survey and advice from the Department of Health in its review of dust risks in Newman. The amended licences require improved dust controls and monitoring to be implemented by BHP to reduce dust.