

ELECTRICITY SUPPLY — REGIONS

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

Before I ask the first question, I would first like to acknowledge the passing of Peter Dooley, a longstanding friend to all in this place. He will be greatly missed.

I note the recent change in the Western Power technical requirements from February 2022 that may impact 90 000 rural connections outside Albany, Geraldton, Kalgoorlie and Bunbury, which only have 32-amp allocations, which will impact rural families and regional businesses.

- (1) Why is the supply allocation 63 amps in Perth when rural properties are left with a significantly lower supply allocation?
- (2) Noting the concern of solar installers who have seen a rapid drop in business as a result of this change, is there a review underway by Western Power?
- (3) When will the results of any review be made public?

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON replied:

- (1)–(3) I am pleased with the question. As I am not an engineer, the technical requirements that Western Power apply to the need for safely installing electrical equipment is not something I personally supervise. I have been advised of the change, which is in respect of the safe operation of the electrical system. The 32-amp allowance has not changed. That is not anything new. That is the existing supply capacity on each of the circuits in regional Western Australia. I know there has been some commentary about that having changed. That is, in fact, not a change. I understand there is some impact from the safety management of the network, but the decision to operate the system in a safe manner is reflective of Horizon and Western Power's safety management of the network. Again, there is an implication that there has been a change to supply capacity, but I make it clear that is not the case. The supply capacity remains exactly the same at 32 amps.