

VARANUS ISLAND GAS PLANT — ALLEGED POLLUTION

1812. Hon Dr Brad Pettitt to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Energy:

I refer to airborne Nitrogen Dioxide and Particle Matter clouds seen over Varanus Production Area, centred to the east of Montebello Islands and north of Lowendal Island, using Copernicus satellite imagery and showing extremely high and dangerous concentrations of NO<sub>2</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> since at least Friday 27 October 2023, and I ask:

- (a) is the Department aware of a breach of the Santos gas production license to operate smokelessly from the Varanus Production Area at any time during:
  - (i) August 2023;
  - (ii) September 2023;
  - (iii) October 2023; and
  - (iv) November 2023;
- (b) if yes to (a), what was done or is currently being done to contain the pollution;
- (c) if nothing was done at any point during breaches, why not;
- (d) will Santos be fined for breaching their gas production license;
- (e) if not, will the department investigate the matter;
- (f) if not, why not;
- (g) if any breaches are confirmed, will decisive action be taken against Santos;
- (h) if no to (g), why not; and
- (i) what was done to ensure health impacts of NO<sub>2</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> were advised to City of Karratha residents and further minimised for Dampier, Karratha, Roebourne and any other residential communities impacted?

**Hon Darren West replied:**

- (a) No to answers (i) to (iv).
- (b) Not Applicable.
- (c) Not Applicable.
- (d) Not Applicable.
- (e) The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) will make further inquiries into the alleged emissions. The Copernicus satellite imagery referred to in the question has not been provided.
- (f) Not Applicable.
- (g) Any identified breaches will be dealt with in accordance with DWER's Compliance and Enforcement Policy.
- (h) Not Applicable.
- (i) There is currently no information available to DWER to suggest that these Communities are being affected by alleged emissions from activities on Varanus Island.