

BIOMASS PLANT — MANJIMUP

71. Hon PAUL LLEWELLYN to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for the Environment:

Further to my written request to the minister of 8 February 2008 regarding the proposed biomass plant to be located near Diamond Hill, Manjimup, I ask —

- (1)
 - (a) Is the minister aware of the concerns that the Department of Health has expressed regarding the quality of assessment of the potential air pollution and emissions from the proposed plant undertaken to date?
 - (b) Is the minister aware of the related health impact on the community?
- (2) What powers does the minister have to commission an independent study into the potential environmental and public health impacts of air pollution and emissions from the proposed biomass plant in Manjimup?
- (3) Has the minister discussed, or otherwise raised, the matter of an independent air pollution study of the operation of the biomass plant —
 - (a) with the Department of the Environment;
 - (b) with the Environmental Protection Authority; and
 - (c) with any other agencies?
- (4) If yes to (3), can the minister please table any such supporting notes and memorandums pertaining to those actions?
- (5) If no to (3), what actions is the minister taking to address the concerns of the Manjimup community in relation to air pollution and emissions from the proposed plant and related environmental health impacts?

Hon SALLY TALBOT replied:

I thank Hon Paul Llewellyn for some notice of this question. The Minister for the Environment has provided an answer in the following terms —

- (1)
 - (a) Yes.
 - (b) No.
- (2) The proposed biomass power plant in Manjimup is currently the subject of an environmental impact assessment by the Environmental Protection Authority. The EPA is an independent body, and its assessment will include specialist advice from the Department of Health before it provides its advice to the Minister for the Environment. The EPA will report its recommendations to the minister once its assessment of the proposal is complete.
- (3) (a)-(c) No.
- (4) Not applicable.
- (5) The minister will give full consideration to the EPA's reports, and any appeal received, and will consult with relevant ministers and decision-making authorities pursuant to section 45 of the Environmental Protection Act 1986 before making his decision on the proposal.