

WESTERN POWER — SUPPLY ALLOCATION

419. Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Energy:

I refer to the Minister for Energy's backflip media statement of 3 April 2023, titled "New across the board standard power supply allocation for SWIS", in light of the extended communication debacle and fiscal imposts suffered by regional businesses and regional consumers impacted by Western Power's ill-conceived 32-amp regional supply discrimination.

- (1) Does the government's welcome but lacking in any detail backflip on the regional power discrimination policy mean that the supply of 63 amps to regional power users is safe after all?
- (2) If yes to (1), was Western Power's use of safety as a justification for the discriminatory policy untrue?
- (3) Will the minister commit to implement a comprehensive compensation package to all regional businesses and households impacted by the application of the 32-amp regional power discrimination policy?
- (4) If no to (3), why not?

Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question. The following answer has been provided to me by the Minister for Energy.

- (1)–(2) There has been no backflip regarding this matter.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: There's comedy already!

Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN: Do you want the answer?

The PRESIDENT: Order! I will respond to members' interjections if you respond to the question.

Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN: Thank you. I shall endeavour to do so, hopefully without interruption.

Western Power listened to community and industry feedback and initiated a desktop review of the rural standard supply allocation. The review concluded it may be possible to increase rural supply allocations from 32-amp single-phase to 63-amp single-phase, in line with metropolitan connections. Following this, Western Power conducted a trial to test increasing rural supply allocation to 63-amp single-phase across seven local government areas in the south west and wheatbelt regions. This work was required to confirm that the rural supply allocation could be increased without causing safety and reliability issues.

- (3)–(4) No compensation is required because Western Power is taking direct action. For eligible customers who installed a lower rated main switch circuit breaker between 1 August 2021 and 11 April 2023, Western Power will reimburse the cost of a main switch circuit breaker upgrade to the value of \$250.