

WESTERN POWER — SUPPLY ALLOCATION

**1015. Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Energy:**

I refer to Western Power's wholly inadequate media release of 19 October 2022 announcing a trial to increase supply allocation in parts of the south west and wheatbelt regions between now and 31 March 2023, which states —

Homes and businesses in the Shires of Boyup Brook, Bridgetown–Greenbushes, Collie, Donnybrook–Balingup, Nannup, West Arthur and Williams will be able to install a main switch circuit breaker of equal rating to those required in urban areas—63 Amp.

- (1) Why have 90 per cent of regional shires been excluded from this trial, rendering them exposed to amperage reductions to 32 amps if they make any electrical changes or upgrades to their residences or businesses?
- (2) How many homes and businesses in the trial area currently have main switch circuit breakers that restrict them to 32 amps?
- (3) Given that nearly every residence and business currently has main switch circuit breakers well above 32 amps, despite the government's rules, which it started to enforce only in February 2022, can the minister confirm that his trial will in effect allow most of those home and business owners to simply keep their existing higher amperage main switch circuit breakers in place?

**Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN replied:**

I thank the member for some notice of the question. The following answer is based on information provided to me by the Minister for Energy.

- (1) Western Power selected the trial area, covering approximately 13 800 homes and businesses, based on a number of technical factors. It is a representative sample of a diverse range of rural customers with different energy needs and includes equipment useful for pilot program purposes. A number of regional shires are considered large regional areas and already have a standard single-phase supply allocation of 63 amps.
- (2) In the trial area, Western Power is aware of 45 sites that have installed 32-amp circuit breakers.
- (3) The rural supply allocation of 32 amps has not changed. The only change is the August 2021 update of the *Western Australian service and installation requirements*. This states that any major alterations, including the addition of new circuits, require a main switch circuit breaker—a safety switch—set to the allocated supply of the site or any limiting components within the installation. This follows trends set by the Australian Industry Standards best practice.