

FREMANTLE PORTS DREDGING — SILT PLUMES

**820. Hon SALLY TALBOT to the Minister for Environment:**

I refer the minister to the article on the front page of today's *The West Australian* titled "Silt plumes threat to beaches over summer".

- (1) What are the effects of these harmful substances on —
  - (a) humans; and
  - (b) local wildlife?
- (2) What plans are in place to monitor any effect of this dredging on the local environment?
- (3) What information campaign is planned to inform beachgoers of any possible risk associated with this dredging?

**Hon DONNA FARAGHER replied:**

I thank the honourable member for some notice of her question.

- (1) I am advised that the contaminants in the sediment referred to in today's *The West Australian* are below national water quality guideline levels that require special management. I am advised by the Department of Environment and Conservation that the levels of these contaminants do not pose a health or environmental risk. However, I understand that all of these contaminated sediments will be contained in the Rous Head site.
- (2) Following assessment by the Environmental Protection Authority and as part of the environmental approval for this project, Fremantle Ports is required to monitor discharges from the reclamation area at Rous Head during and at least six months following the dredging and disposal activity to demonstrate that the high ecological values adjacent to Rous Head have re-established. This is through the water quality monitoring program, which must be approved by the chief executive officer of the Department of Environment and Conservation.
- (3) I understand that Fremantle Ports has been implementing an information program to inform local authorities, port users and the public about the project.

I also advise the house that this particular project was subject to a public environmental review, which was open for a six-week public comment period. When the Environmental Protection Authority provided its report to me in June, it was open for the usual two-week public appeal period and no appeals were lodged at that time, so I just inform the member of that.