

WEST KIMBERLEY TIDAL POWER, FIBRE-OPTIC CABLE

774. Hon Tom Stephens to the Parliamentary Secretary representing the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has the Minister for Education or the Education Department assessed what benefits would be gained from running an optic fibre cable along the top of the proposed tidal power transmission line in the West Kimberley Region, particularly to the schools of the regional towns and remote communities of this region?
- (2) If yes, what were the results of that assessment and has the Minister relayed those results to the Minister for Energy?
- (3) If not, why not and will the Minister now have one carried out?

Hon BARRY HOUSE replied:

- (1) No, however, the vast majority of Western Australian government schools already have access to high band width terrestrial and satellite data services through carrier contracts on the whole of government statewide telecommunications enhancement program.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) The Education Department is not in the business of building telecommunications infrastructure but does purchase such services from licensed telecommunications carriers under mandatory government contracts. The Education Department does, however, regularly meet with telecommunications carriers to provide input into future telecommunications requirements with respect to performance, bandwidth, reliability, average fault rectification times and network coverage.