

MINING - KALTAILS TAILINGS DAM - CONTAINMENT OF SEEPAGE

4923. Hon Giz Watson to the Parliamentary Secretary representing the Minister for the Environment

Regarding the Kaltails Toxic Tailings Dam, the lakeside conservation reserve for the preservation of sandalwood and the Kalgoorlie Consolidated Gold Mines Pty Ltd (KCGM) environmental scoping document dated, 20 January 2006 titled Fimiston Gold Mine operations extension (stage three) and mine closure planning, I ask -

- (1) Is it correct that the KCGM environmental scoping document dated 20 January 2006 in part states: 'A loss of vegetation on this reserve was attributed to seepage from the Kaltails facility. Initial measures to reduce the impacts were implemented and included the construction of interception trenches along the basement of the TSF embankments. In 1992, the construction and operation of dewatering bores successfully controlled the seepage and groundwater level. In 1995 part of the original reserve was excised following the vegetation loss to the south of the TSF'?
- (2) If no to (1), will the Minister quote, in full, the scoping document dated 20 January 2006?
- (3) Is it correct that the operator of the Kaltails facility was issued a works approval to construct the tailings dam with a condition that stated that 'all matter containing saline, alkaline, or cyanide constituents shall be retained within impervious holding facilities such that there is no discernible impairment of surface or underground waters'?
- (4) If no to (3), will the Minister quote the full text of the works approval condition?
- (5) Can the Minister state how did the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) carry out and satisfy itself that all the requirements of the works approval and conditions were met for the Kaltails tailings dam, when it was first constructed?
- (6) If no to (5), why not?
- (7) Did the DEC require a compliance certificate from the works approval holder at the completion of works stating that the works had been completed in accordance with approval conditions?
- (8) If yes to (7), will the Minister quote the full text of this document and table a copy?
- (9) If no to (7), why not?
- (10) Will the Minister table a copy of the works approval issued for the Kaltails tailings dam when it was first constructed?
- (11) If no to (10), why not?

Hon SALLY TALBOT replied:

- (1) The quote from KCGM's environmental scoping document dated 20 January 2006 is correct except that the word "basement" should read "base".
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3)-(11) The Kaltails tailings facility has not been actively deposited to for some years. The Kaltails operation started in 1989 and was decommissioned in 1999 and the records associated with its activity are in archive. I do not support the use of the resources of the Department of Environment and Conservation to locate and retrieve these files, particularly when there is no evidence to suggest that there are any current environmental impacts as a result of this facility, and as a result there are no active investigations with respect to seepage or impacts relating to the facility.