

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

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

- (1) Does the minister remember saying on 12 July that greenhouse gas abatement was best addressed through a national approach, and the timing and details were a matter for the federal government?
- (2) What discussions has the minister had with her commonwealth counterpart regarding the proposed new Coolimba power station at Eneabba, the expansion of the Bluewaters power station at Collie and the refurbishment of the Muja A–B power station at Collie?
- (3) Does the minister also remember saying on the same day that it was appropriate for proponents to implement greenhouse gas abatement programs to address carbon emissions prior to the introduction of a national approach?
- (4) What measures will companies be putting in place before a national approach is adopted?

**Hon DONNA FARAGHER replied:**

I thank the member for her question.

- (1)–(4) Yes, I did say that, and the government has been very clear that greenhouse gas emissions are a matter for national and international arrangements. As the member would be aware, albeit we are in the middle of a federal election campaign and who knows what will happen at the end of August, in the unfortunate event that—I was going to say the Rudd government—the Gillard government is returned, apparently there will be a 150-person think tank to work out how we deal with climate change.

**Hon Simon O'Brien:** That's because they don't know.

**Hon DONNA FARAGHER:** They do not know. However, having said that, we have been very clear that we believe these matters should be dealt with at the national level; there should be a consistent approach. We said this prior to making a decision on the projects to which the member has referred. I should say that Mick Murray, one of the colleagues of members opposite, supported the decisions that I made, so I am keen to hear what Hon Sally Talbot's views are. Having said that, I looked at these issues very, very carefully, recognising the fact that whilst we believe the best approach is at the national level, there is recognition that there has been a delay. Therefore, it is appropriate that we require companies to have a greenhouse gas abatement program.

**Hon Sally Talbot:** So you haven't actually spoken to anybody?

**Hon DONNA FARAGHER:** I am answering the question.

**Hon Sally Talbot** interjected.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! Let the minister answer the question.

**Hon DONNA FARAGHER:** I make decisions on state environmental approval processes. Prior to these decisions, I have consistently said—members can look at *Hansard* on issues surrounding greenhouse matters—that we believe it is best addressed at the national and international level, and that is supported by the Environmental Protection Authority. What I have also said, in making those determinations, is that I believe it is important that companies do everything they can to reduce emissions. That is why I require that they develop a greenhouse gas abatement program, which will not only have to be assessed and approved by the EPA but also be subject to independent specialists who will determine whether or not they are undertaking best practices. I require the proponents of these projects to actually deal with issues surrounding emissions prior to a national approach being taken. I recognise that we are not quite sure at this point in time what that national approach will be—again, it is left up to 150 people to work out, apparently. But having said that, I think it is important that we place an onus on proponents to reduce their emissions at the state level, and that is what I have done.