

MINING APPROVALS INDUSTRY WORKING GROUP — MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT

**287. Hon SALLY TALBOT to the Minister for Mines and Petroleum:**

Has the minister briefed or been asked for a brief, either verbally or in writing, by the Minister for Environment with regard to the lead agency model being proposed by the mining approvals industry working group?

**Hon NORMAN MOORE replied:**

I have had a number of discussions with the Minister for Environment about the approvals process ever since we came to government because, as I said earlier today, one of the problems this government has faced has been the gumming up of the approval system to the point where it is almost dysfunctional. That is not just my view; it is the view of the Auditor General as well. Therefore, I have had a number of discussions with the Minister for Environment about the way forward.

In respect of the ministerial working party that is looking at this whole issue of mining approvals from the point of view of industry, it has not made any recommendations to me at all. Indeed, there has been some media coverage of some leaked documents in recent times, which would suggest that somehow or other the leaked document that came out last week was in fact a cabinet submission that I was taking to cabinet. In fact, the document was a submission made to Mr Jones's committee by the Chamber of Minerals and Energy of Western Australia and the Australian Petroleum Production and Exploration Association. That is what it was.

**Hon Kim Chance:** Cabinet's leaking!

**Hon NORMAN MOORE:** No, it has not gone to cabinet. That was the interpretation put on a leaked document by a newspaper and, indeed, by your colleague who sits next to you.

**Hon Sally Talbot:** Not by me.

**Hon NORMAN MOORE:** I am simply saying that the particular document that was considered by the media, or at least one media outlet, to be a cabinet submission was, in fact, a submission made to the inquiry and had no more credibility in terms of government policy than anything else.

The second thing is that the working group has not made any recommendations to me as the minister and, indeed, when it does, they will simply be recommendations to the Minister for Mines and Petroleum, presenting to me in that capacity the views of the industry. I will then take the views of industry to a cabinet subcommittee that is looking at approvals across the board, and I will be able to present the views of the mining industry to that group. Whether it accepts the recommendations of the working party is for the cabinet subcommittee to decide; I think that is the proper process to adopt. However, I want to make one thing very, very clear: anybody in this chamber who does not understand how important the resource sector is to the Western Australian economy is either blind, deaf, dumb or all of them.