

FREMANTLE PORT — LEAD EXPORT

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

- (1) Has the minister seen today's media report headlined "Pollution high on lead route"?
- (2) Does the minister believe that the testing regime for the transport of lead through Perth suburbs to the port of Fremantle is adequate, and I refer specifically to the distance between testing points in metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas?
- (3) Has the minister or the minister's office discussed these findings with any person connected with Magellan Metals?
- (4) Why did the minister not respond to media questions about these baseline level findings?

**Hon DONNA FARAGHER replied:**

I thank the member for her question.

- (1) Yes, I have seen the report.
- (2)-(4) I will answer the third question first. As I understand, the department had actually provided the information and we are actually providing some more information to *The West Australian* today, so there is nothing in that.

The sampling was undertaken to ensure that there are baseline levels, so that when Magellan Metals commences the transport of lead through to Fremantle and through all the other parts, we can actually measure the levels. There are certain monitoring requirements, and should it be seen that there is any elevation in lead levels, that will immediately require Magellan to undertake work to determine whether—this will then, obviously, involve my department—that lead, if there is any elevation, is actually Magellan's. If that is found to be the case, the transportation will cease immediately. The work that has been undertaken so far relates to baseline levels. Magellan, obviously, as the member would be aware, has not commenced the transportation of lead at this stage, so we need a baseline level that we can measure against in the unlikely event that lead is in the atmosphere along the transport route.

With respect to the comment that there has been elevated levels in, I think, about five of the 250 sites where that work has been undertaken, it is my understanding that the Department of Environment and Conservation, along with the Public Transport Authority, is actually investigating those at the moment. However, it has to be remembered that we do not live in a pure environment; the reality is that when we do this testing, we may well find things. That is just the reality; we had things like leaded petrol and lead in paint and other things along the transport route. We do not live in a cocoon, so that is a reality. Having said that, the department and the Public Transport Authority are investigating the matter and, as I have said and as I have made very clear, in the event that there is any elevation of lead levels observed through monitoring, Magellan will be required to undertake some work, and if it is identified that it is Magellan's lead, it will cease transport immediately.