

BUSSELTON — PORT GEOGRAPHE DEVELOPMENT

375. Hon SHELLEY EATON to the minister representing the Minister for Health:

I ask this question on behalf of Hon Adele Farina, who has had to leave the chamber.

I refer to the Port Geographe development in Busselton and the recently released information that during the 2008 bypass works, hydrogen sulphide levels recorded at residents' houses exceeded acceptable levels set by the World Health Organization.

- (1) What action is the minister taking to ensure that there is no repeat of these high and unacceptable hydrogen sulphide levels during this year's works?
- (2) What measures are being put in place to protect residents' health from these harmful hydrogen sulphide levels?
- (3) Will the minister direct the Department of Health to undertake its own independent monitoring of hydrogen sulphide levels during this year's works?
- (4) If no to (3), why not?
- (5) Will the minister direct the Department of Health to undertake a health survey of residents living in and near Port Geographe?
- (6) If no to (5), why not?
- (7) Will the minister meet with representatives of the Port Geographe Action Group to discuss their concerns with this development?
- (8) If no to (7), why not?

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN replied:

This is a question standing in the name of Hon Adele Farina, and I thank the member for notice of question. The Minister for Health has provided an answer in these terms —

- (1) The Department of Health has been reviewing the latest air monitoring results from Port Geographe and a report will be available at the end of April 2009. Preliminary results indicate that there were short-term peaks of hydrogen sulphide levels, but long-term levels were not above World Health Organization guidelines. The likely health affects would be associated with the presence of strong hydrogen sulphide odours.

The Department of Health will be liaising with government bodies overseeing the issue—the Department of Environment and Conservation and the Shire of Busselton—regarding management strategies that could be used to prevent exposure of the community to hydrogen sulphide.
- (2) The Department of Environment and Conservation and the Shire of Busselton are the agencies overseeing this issue, and the Department of Health will be providing appropriate advice to these agencies.
- (3) No.
- (4) The Department of Health is not the overseeing agency. The 2008 season monitoring was undertaken by the developer, the Shire of Busselton and the Port Geographe Action Group.
- (5) No.
- (6) The Department of Health has received the Port Geographe Action Group's 2007 health survey. The results are consistent with health affects for some individuals associated with strong odours.
- (7) No.
- (8) The Minister for Health will instruct the Department of Health to forward its report directly to the Port Geographe Action Group.