

SINGLE-USE PLASTICS

559. Hon TJORN SIBMA to the minister representing the Minister for Environment:

Thank you, President, for giving me the call. I did not think I was going to get the opportunity, to be honest.

This question is dated 17 August and just for reference is C542.

I refer to Premier's Circular 2018/03 headed "Reducing the Use of Disposable Plastic".

- (1) Have agency-level sustainable procurement practices been monitored by the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation in the three years following the publication of the Premier's circular?
- (2) Has performance been recorded against the two minimum criteria —
 - (a) replacing commonly purchased single-use plastic products with recyclable, compostable or re-usable alternatives; and
 - (b) reviewing existing agency contracts to achieve better pricing and discussing opportunities with suppliers to substitute plastic products with re-usable and compostable products?
- (3) If yes to (1) and (2), what are the results?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. The following answer has been provided to me by the Minister for Environment.

- (1)–(3) In 2020, the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation circulated a survey to agencies and entities subject to the Premier's circular to understand current plastic procurement practices. Responses from 46 agencies identified common plastics procured, solutions in place and assistance needed to source alternatives. Directors general and chief executive officers are responsible for compliance with the Premier's circular and making responsible decisions about the use of disposable plastic products. The Department of Finance is responsible for common-use agreements for the purchasing of non-plastic alternatives. The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation has provided advice to the Department of Finance on the agreement to improve sustainability criteria. The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation is also assisting with developing standard clauses for inclusion in agreements and agency tenders to support improved purchasing practices.

In addition, the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation is developing materials to support government agencies to reduce plastic procurement. This includes —

- (i) a sustainable procurement guide for state government agency use. The guide will include preferred procurement options and management of re-usable and single-use compostable alternatives as well as best practice waste disposal;
- (ii) support for agencies to undertake audits of their single-use plastic procurement practices to gain accurate data on single-use plastic consumption and recycling;
- (iii) the development of education materials to support agencies communicate more sustainable procurement practices—for example, checklists, product guides and case studies; and
- (iv) assisting agencies to develop tools that are measurable to evaluate the effectiveness of the circular's implementation.