

QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE
(of which some notice has been given)

Thursday, 14 June 2012

Robin Chapple MLC to the Minister for Mines.

I refer to conversations and questions asked in Estimates on Wednesday, 6 June 2012 in relation to Bonds and ask:

On 8 of May the Minister announced the government's intentions to 'reform environmental regulation' where it is administered under the Mining Act. This reform process and the proposed regulatory system clearly requires a significant increase in resources. There were however apparently no new resources in the State Budget to implement the reforms.

1. How and when will the government's 'reform of environmental regulation' program be funded?

I note the government intends to introduce distinct legislation to establish the "Fidelity Fund" to deal with mine legacy issues.

2. Will this Act also contain specific criminal offenses for mine abandonment resulting in non-compliance with mine closure plans?
3. If no to (2.) why not?

I thank the Hon Member for some notice of the question.

1. The Government's "reform of environmental regulation" program will initially involve the establishment of a Ministerial Advisory Panel to develop the components of the reform with stakeholder input. It is expected that the Advisory Panel will establish stakeholder working groups to provide further detail to the reform. This process is scheduled to commence this month with recommendations due in December 2012. Following this the Government will be in a position to advise on how and when it will fund environmental reform.

- 2-3. The legislation being drafted to implement a Mining Rehabilitation Fund is to ensure that environmental liabilities for abandoned mines are met by industry. It does not include legislation dealing with criminal offences for environmental non-compliance which is addressed through the *Mining Act 1978*. Compliance is one of the key issues being proposed for consideration through the environmental review process outlined in the response to question 1. This will identify further mechanisms to ensure compliance.

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