CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY

1338. Hon TIM CLIFFORD to the Minister for Environment:

I refer to the minister's announcement yesterday that the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation's climate change unit will develop a new climate change policy over the next 12 months.

(1) I have asked numerous questions in this place about the government's intentions on climate change policy development and have been assured that significant amounts of work have already been undertaken, including stakeholder consultation and a stocktake of climate change actions. Could the minister please explain why this policy will take a further 12 months to develop?

(2) Will additional resources be provided to the climate change unit to fast track the development of the policy; and, if so, will the minister please detail the extent of these resources?

(3) Will the minister consider introducing a renewable energy target, a net zero emissions target or a statewide ban on fracking as part of the climate change policy?

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY replied:

I provide the following answer on behalf of the Minister for Environment.

(1) Climate change issues cut across numerous sectors, impacting most areas of our economy, society and environment. The McGowan government takes climate change seriously and is committed to playing a positive role in developing an effective and carefully considered policy. Although many climate change issues are already being addressed by state agencies, industry and the community, it is critical that future climate risks and opportunities are carefully considered as part of the development of a new state climate change policy.

(2) Since coming to power in 2017, the McGowan government has re-established and resourced the climate change unit in the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, which now has six full-time positions overseen by a director and executive director. The new positions were created to support the development of policy advice to the government and are currently considered to be sufficient. Should additional resources be required, this will be reconsidered.

(3) As I have previously stated on numerous occasions in this place, the McGowan government considers a national approach as the most efficient and effective way to deliver on Australia's international commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. A broad range of policy objectives will be considered in the development of a new climate change policy as part of the process. The McGowan government has delivered on its election promise to ban fracking in Perth, Peel and the south west, and, in line with the findings and recommendations of the independent scientific inquiry, will be introducing world-class standards to regulate the industry in other parts of the state.