

CLIMATE CHANGE - GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE

**185. Mr P.W. ANDREWS to the Minister for Climate Change:**

Can the minister please outline the state government's most recent response to climate change?

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN replied:**

I thank the member for Southern River for his question and for his commitment to ensuring that climate change remains an important issue that the government will continue to work diligently to address. Before I begin, I need to highlight and outline to the house what the government has already done to address this issue which faces all of us and which is one of the biggest threats that faces our economy, our environment and, of course, our unique lifestyle here in Western Australia. I will highlight a number of the initiatives that this government has been involved in and embarked on. The 45-gigalitre desalination plant is one such example. Other initiatives include the Perth-Mandurah rail, which will remove 25 000 cars from our roads; the increase in the amount of renewable energy produced on the south west interconnected system from one per cent to six per cent; and new wind farms on Rottnest Island and in regional areas such as Esperance, Hopetoun, Bremer Bay, Exmouth and Denham, to name a few. We all know that Western Australia has the most greenhouse-friendly electricity because of our commitment to natural gas as one of our primary energy sources. We need to do more, which is what the Premier and this government are doing. The Premier's climate change statement, which he made on Sunday, contains a range of initiatives. First, we have set a renewable target of 15 per cent by 2020 and 20 per cent by 2025. We have also committed to purchase 20 per cent of our power from renewable sources by 2010. The Premier's statement also referred to an expansion of the very important Solar Schools project, which, of course, will result in an increase, from 100 to 350, in the number of schools in our community that focus on the use of solar power. Second, through the climate change statement, we aim to deliver initiatives to achieve low emission cuts. These include mandatory energy efficiency schemes for large businesses, the household audit and education program and the very important five-star plus building standards, which the Premier highlighted in his presentation on Sunday. Third, we are also very interested in ensuring that we design initiatives to grow the renewable energy sector. That is why essential to the Premier's announcement is the \$36.5 million low emissions energy development fund, which will focus on ensuring that we look at emissions reductions in the energy sector. The low emissions energy development fund is designed to fast-track development and innovation in that sector. The people of Western Australia know that if the Liberal Party is elected at the next state election, there will be nuclear power in this state, which is one of the things that this government will not commit to. The people of Western Australia know that this government will not go down the John Howard-Mr Burns scenario of nuclear power in this state. There will be a clear choice at the next state election, which will help voters. This package is focused on ensuring that every individual, family, business and sector of the community understands that they - and this government - have a responsibility to ensure that we take seriously the threat of climate change. This government does not come up with the harebrained schemes that the Liberals come up with. I refer to the federal member for Tangney's claim that we should put up a large garden shadecloth in outer space to address climate change. This government is serious about climate change. This package is the first step towards ensuring that we address this issue now and into the future to protect the lifestyle of all Western Australians.