

BUSHFIRE SMOKE — KARRATHA

**1352. Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Environment:**

I refer to airborne nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter 2.5 clouds seen over Varanus Island using online satellite imaging showing extremely high and dangerous concentrations since at least Friday, 27 October 2023, including spikes on Monday, 30 October 2023; Tuesday, 31 October 2023; and Monday, 6 November 2023. I also refer to reports of thick smog and health impacts coming from Karratha.

- (1) Is the government aware of a major leak from the Varanus Island facility?
- (2) If yes to (1), what is being done to contain the leak?
- (3) If no to (1), what is the source of the high concentrations of nitrogen dioxide and PM2.5 that have been recorded in the area, including in Karratha, for over a week?
- (4) What is being done to ensure that the health impacts are minimised for residents of Karratha, Dampier, Onslow, Roebourne, Port Hedland and any other communities that may be impacted?

**Hon DARREN WEST replied:**

I thank the member for some notice of the question. On behalf of the Minister for Environment I provide the following answer.

- (1) No.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation understands that a number of fires are burning in the region, that the smoke has been moving out to sea and that localised impacts in coastal areas is possible.
- (4) There is currently no information available to Department of Water and Environmental Regulation to suggest that smoke is associated with any industrial emission. The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation is aware that there has been a bushfire smoke alert issued for the Pilbara by Emergency WA, which includes Karratha and Roebourne.