

WAGERUP REFINERY, CAUSTIC LAKE, MONITORING

2927. Mr M.P. Murray to the Minister for the Environment

I refer to the operations at Wagerup Refinery and ask -

- (a) what is the minimum distance from a caustic lake considered safe for distribution and by whom is that regulated;
- (b) who monitors air emissions and water run off from the caustic lake; and
- (c) what is the exact regime of that monitoring program?

Dr J.M. EDWARDS replied:

- (a) The intent of the Honourable Member's question is unclear however, it has been assumed that the question relates to the minimum distance from a Residue Disposal Area (RDA) to the nearest residential dwelling. If this is the case, the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) advises that there is no specific environmental standard for minimum distance between RDAs and residential use. As such, there is no regulation of the distance.  
  
The matter of whether the distance between the RDAs and the nearest residential use is considered safe from a human health perspective is primarily a matter for the Minister for Health.
- (b) The current licence contains requirements to monitor dust around the RDA. Currently the monitoring equipment is maintained and calibrated by a consultant and filter papers are changed and analysed by Alcoa staff. The report generated from this monitoring is then assessed by the DEP. There is no water runoff from the RDA.
- (c) Dust monitoring under (b) is undertaken for Total Suspended Particulates (TSP) (daily 24 hour samples). Particulate Mass Fraction 10 micrograms or less (PM<sub>10</sub>) is undertaken at two locations on a trial basis to assess the significance of this particle size.