

COCKBURN CEMENT LTD, ENVIRONMENTAL AUDIT AND REVIEW

5. Hon JIM SCOTT to the minister representing the Minister for the Environment and Heritage:

I refer to the environmental audit and review of Cockburn Cement Ltd.

- (1) What action will the Minister for the Environment and Heritage take following the recommendations made by the environmental audit and review of Cockburn Cement?
- (2) Will the minister allow any expansion of the Cockburn Cement plant in its current location in the City of Cockburn?
- (3) Given that the review identified serious inadequacies in the auditing and licensing of Cockburn Cement, will the minister apply more stringent and enforceable conditions to ensure that public health is protected?
- (4) Will this include regular independent emission testing?

Hon TOM STEPHENS replied:

- (1) The Minister for the Environment and Heritage has previously requested that the Department of Environmental Protection provide advice on the options for a review of the department's enforcement and prosecutions guidelines with a view to developing a more substantive enforcement policy.

Following the release of the audit report, the minister has also requested advice on how the DEP will ensure that the range of licensing issues raised in the report will be addressed. The DEP will engage a consultant to review the practice and principles of setting licence conditions for the licensing system and provide strategic advice and recommendations on potential improvements. The Kwinana office has been provided with additional resources, including a senior manager, as a result of the amalgamation of the Water and Rivers Commission and the Department of Environmental Protection.

The Department of Environmental Protection has implemented a number of actions to address the recommendations made in the audit report. Licensing procedures have been rewritten and made available online to all staff members to ensure consistency in process and decision making. The Kwinana office has implemented a new records management system to address the deficiencies in record keeping that were highlighted in the report. It has also revised complaints response procedures. A community reference advisory group has been developed to oversee the implementation of the recommendations of the audit report.

- (2) There are no applications before the Department of Environmental Protection to expand Cockburn Cement Ltd's Munster operations, and the DEP is not aware of any proposals to increase capacity at the site. Any proposal to expand the operations of Cockburn Cement that may affect the emissions produced would require regulatory approval, including a detailed assessment of the proposal and community consultation.
- (3) Yes. The Department of Environmental Protection is currently reviewing all issues highlighted as a result of the audit including the development of more stringent and enforceable licence conditions.
- (4) Yes.