

WASTE CONTROL BELLEVUE, CHEMICAL EXPOSURE SYMPTOMS

131. Hon J.A. SCOTT to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Health:

In relation to the explosion and fire at Waste Control Pty Ltd Bellevue -

- (1) Have any doctors reported to the Health Department that they have treated patients with chemical exposure symptoms; if so, can the minister provide details?
- (2) Has the Health Department carried out a review of its performance following the explosion and fire?
- (3) If so, will the minister table a copy of that review; if not, why not?

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

- (1) Yes. In response to a Health Department of Western Australia questionnaire to general practitioners which asked the following question, "How many people have you examined that you believe are experiencing symptoms as a result of the Bellevue fire?", general practitioners advised that of 26 individuals who were or claimed to be exposed, 18 were believed by general practitioners to have symptoms consistent with exposure. Typical symptoms reported were headache, skin irritation, sore eyes, shortness of breath or upset stomach. In addition, the Health Department has received correspondence from one general practitioner who believes the symptoms of one patient may have been related to exposure to the smoke from the fire.
- (2) The Health Department is conducting an internal critical incident review. This is standard operating procedure after such incidents to ensure that the Health Department's processes and protocols were effective and to identify any improvements that can be made. The Government has announced that the inquiry into the fire at Waste Control Pty Ltd, Bellevue will be referred to a parliamentary standing committee. This committee will examine the response of relevant government agencies, including the Health Department of Western Australia.