ASCOT WATERS, WATER SAMPLING AND MONITORING OF SWAN RIVER

1875.   Hon Jim Scott to the Minister for Local Government and Regional Development representing the Minister for the Environment

The Egis Consulting report of 1998-1999, Ascot Waters Post-Construction Phase Performance and Compliance, identified water quality exceedances of nitrogen and phosphorous in the waters around Ascot Waters. The report, Ascot (Kuljac) Island Proposed Minor Changes to the Proposal, prepared by Bowman Bishaw Gorman for the Department of Planning and Infrastructure in 2002 found levels of heavy metals and pesticides high enough to trigger site investigation leaching into the Swan River.

(1)   Has the Minister ordered further water monitoring and sampling to be carried out?

(2)   If yes, will the Minister table the monitoring results?

(3)   If not, does the Minister consider that continued leaching of contaminants into the Swan River acceptable?

Hon TOM STEPHENS replied:

The Minister for the Environment has provided the following response:

(1)   No.

(2)   Not applicable.

(3)   The Belmont landfill site at Ascot Waters is one of the 13 known disused landfill sites along the Swan Estuary. Contaminants leaching from these landfill sites have generally not been monitored and quantified.

The Department of Environmental Protection and the Swan River Trust encourages proponents redeveloping these sites to take practical remediation and management measures to reduce leaching of contaminants to the river. Such measures were put in place at Ascot, however, it is almost impossible to prevent leaching altogether.

Although it is of concern, the issue of leachate from landfills along the river is a legacy which the community has inherited from practices that are no longer acceptable. The Swan Canning Cleanup Program establishes priorities for nutrient and other contaminant reduction based on environmental outcomes and best return for effort.