

SWIMMING POOLS, REMOTE ABORIGINAL CENTRES

380. Hon TOM STEPHENS to the minister representing the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs:

I refer to the recent construction of swimming pools in remote Aboriginal communities and ask -

- (1) Is the minister aware that three of these pools do not comply with the Explosive and Dangerous Goods Act because, although licences are not required due to the small amounts involved, they do not meet Australian standards for the storage of chlorine gas?
- (2) Can the minister confirm that this issue was raised during the planning stage of these pools but was ignored?
- (3) Can the minister advise what emergency response procedures are in place for these pools and what immediate steps he will take to ensure that Australian standards are met and there is no risk to public safety?

Hon M.J. CRIDDLE replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

- (1)-(2) Wesfarmers CSBP Ltd, the sole manufacturer of chlorine gas for swimming pools in Western Australia, indicated during the planning stage that, provided no more than two 32-kilogram bottles were used at each site, all regulations and requirements would be met. Subsequent advice indicated that although no licences are required, an exemption from the Act should be obtained. The Ministry of Housing is currently seeking further clarification on this issue. Notwithstanding that only small quantities of chlorine are stored at each site, they are safe.
- (3) Royal Life Saving Society of Australia pool managers have been appointed. The RLSSA has established guidelines for safe pool operation. These guidelines are recognised throughout the aquatics industry and in many instances go beyond the minimal Australian standards.