

COCKBURN SOUND, NICKEL REFINERY DISCHARGES

148. Hon Jim Scott to the Minister for Housing and Works representing the Minister for the Environment and Heritage

In the recently released State of Cockburn Sound report page vi notes that WMC's Nickel Refinery discharges 8 tonnes/annum of nitrogen into Cockburn Sound via groundwater. Table 3.1 on page 70, and the subsequent erratum to Table 3.1, indicate that the figure is 4 tonnes/annum of nitrogen being discharged via groundwater from WMC's Nickel Refinery.

Which figure is correct and what is the reason for the two conflicting amounts?

Hon TOM STEPHENS replied:

The State of Cockburn Sound report states on pages (vi) and 70 that WMC's Nickel Refinery contributes 8 tonnes/annum of nitrogen into Cockburn Sound via groundwater.

Table 3.1 on page 70, and the subsequent erratum to Table 3.1, show that the 8 tonnes is discharged into the Sound via two separate groundwater aquifers.

Four tonnes comes from the upper sandy soils (the Safety Bay Sands aquifer) and a further 4 tonnes discharges from the limestone layer further below (the Tamala Limestone aquifer), giving a total of 8 tonnes.