

OMEX SITE - THIESS ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

**237. Hon J.A. SCOTT to the Attorney General representing the Minister for the Environment:**

Further to my question without notice on 19 September, I refer to part (3) regarding action levels being exceeded at the Omex remediation site.

- (1) Is the Minister for the Environment now aware that progress reports by Thiess Environmental Services for the weeks ending 26 April and 3 May, which stated that alert or action levels had not been exceeded, were incorrect?
- (2) Is the minister further aware that residents living close to the Omex site became ill as a result of the excessive levels?
- (3) Can the minister explain why Thiess supplied the department with incorrect information?
- (4) What action has the minister taken against Thiess Environmental?
- (5) Will the minister apologise to the community affected by the fumes and to the medical practitioners who were incorrectly advised that there was no health risk from the emissions from the Omex site?

**Hon PETER FOSS replied:**

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

- (1) The reports to the Department of Environmental Protection by Thiess Environmental Services for the weeks ending 26 April and 3 May represented Thiess' interpretation of the Omex air monitoring data about alert and action levels being exceeded. The DEP is currently undertaking an in-depth analysis of all the digital data gathered by Thiess.  
  
At the conclusion of its review, the DEP will make public a report on all aspects of the remediation work on the Omex site, to the requirements of the Environmental Protection Authority. Independent advice on public health aspects of the remediation work, including air emissions, will be provided to the EPA by the Health Department of Western Australia.
- (2) The minister is aware that a number of residents complained about being affected by emissions from the Omex site during the remediation work. However, the minister has received no medical confirmation that residents were made ill by these emissions, nor has it yet been confirmed that the complaints of the residents coincided with instances of the levels being exceeded.
- (3)-(4) Until the DEP review of the air monitoring data is completed, it cannot be determined whether Thiess provided incorrect information.
- (5) The minister has received no medical advice that emissions from the Omex site during the remediation work adversely affected the health of nearby residents.