

COLLIE RIVER — CONTAMINATION CONCERN

6004. Mr M.P. Murray to the Minister for Environment; Water

In relation to the recent apparent contamination of the Collie River, I ask:

- (a) is the contamination a result of the dumping of polluted water into the river;
- (b) what action has been taken to clean up the contamination in the river and the creek;
- (c) did Lanco Infratech Limited breach any environmental conditions in allowing the sediment from the mine's dumps to wash into the river; and
 - (i) if so, what was the breach; and
- (d) has an assessment been undertaken to determine whether this incident has had an adverse effect on any flora, fauna or fish stocks; and
 - (i) if yes, what was the outcome of the assessment; and
 - (ii) if not, why not?

Mr W.R. MARMION replied:

- (a) Silt-laden water spilt out of the coal mine, which is owned by Lanco Infratech Ltd, on 28 June 2011 as a result of heavy rain and the failure of water containment structures in the mine.
- (b) The Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) requested that Griffin Coal Mining Company Pty Ltd, as the licensee of the mine, repair and improve the containment structures, and assess and report on the environmental impact.

Griffin Coal has responded by building a larger water containment structure to arrest future high volume rain events and has prepared an environmental remediation plan to recover escaped silt from the waterways in an environmentally acceptable manner.
- (c) DEC is investigating this incident to determine if there has been a breach of Griffin Coal's licence conditions.
- (d) Yes.
 - (i) Griffin Coal's consultant has prepared an environmental assessment report which suggests that the silt would have some temporary adverse impacts on fauna, flora and fish in the affected waterways, that diminishes progressively downstream. The report does not identify endangered species at risk and states that the waterways will return to a normal condition in time. The report recommends a monitoring program.
 - (ii) Not applicable.