

CARBON INNOVATION GRANTS PROGRAM

Statement by Minister for Environment

MR R.R. WHITBY (Baldivis — Minister for Environment) [9.12 am]: I rise to update the house on the results of round one of the Cook government's carbon innovation grants program, the first of its type in Western Australia. The program is designed to assist our state to achieve net zero emissions by 2050, through reducing emissions and building capacity of industry to adopt innovative and emerging technologies for carbon abatement and sequestration. The 22 applications received from a range of industries, all operating in Western Australia, were carefully considered against rigorous selection criteria. Nine of the project proposals were of exceptional merit and have been offered funding to assist them to realise their potential.

It is, therefore, my pleasure to announce the recipients of round one of the carbon innovation grants program. They include Aurizon Operations Ltd, for a project to decarbonise heavy rail transport by installing high-capacity charging infrastructure for battery electric locomotives. CSBP received funding to reduce industrial process emissions from the production of nitric acid and ammonium nitrate through the installation of tertiary abatement technology. This one will interest the member for Churchlands—the CSIRO received funding to trial direct air carbon capture technology from a Wesfarmers industrial manufacturing process. Airbridge Pty Ltd received funding to assess the viability of patented technology for carbon capture and storage. First Mode Pty Ltd received funding to assess the feasibility of a hybrid diesel–battery power plant for retrofitting diesel locomotives. Australia VRFB ESS Co Pty Ltd received funding to test the application of vanadium redox flow batteries to store solar energy and replace diesel power generation at mine sites. Wallis Drilling Pty Ltd received funding to assess the viability of an electrified air core drill rig, solely powered through battery storage and eliminating the use of diesel fuel. Tronox Ltd received funding to identify reductants that can replace coal in processing ilmenite into synthetic rutile for use in the manufacture of pigments. Sea-Quester Offshore Pty Ltd received funding to assess the feasibility of an offshore carbon dioxide sequestration hub to support decarbonisation of the Kwinana heavy industry precinct.

Our government will contribute \$4.24 million to those innovative pilot projects and feasibility studies through the carbon innovation grant. That will enable projects estimated at a total value of \$26 million to be delivered by the recipients. The carbon innovation grants program plays a key role in driving local innovation and cost-effective decarbonisation across our state.