

BEENUP MINERAL SANDS MINE, ACID SULPHATE GROUND WATER PLUME

11. Hon Jim Scott to the Minister for Housing and Works representing the Minister for the Environment and Heritage
- (1) Has the DEP been monitoring the acid sulphate groundwater plume around the former Beenup mineral sands mine?
 - (2) If yes, what is the extent of the acid sulphate groundwater plume?
 - (3) How far is the acid sulphate groundwater plume from the Scott River?
 - (4) Will the Minister table the latest monitoring results from the acid sulphate groundwater plume from the former minesite?

Hon TOM STEPHENS replied:

- (1) The DEP does not do monitoring on behalf of proponents of proposals. However, conditions set by the Minister for the Environment and Heritage in Ministerial Statements may require such monitoring by a proponent if so recommended by the EPA or if determined necessary by the Minister. Conditions 4 of Statement 434, issued to BHP Titanium Minerals Pty Ltd on 22 November 1996, requires the development and implementation of an extensive Groundwater Monitoring Programme. The Monitoring programme now in place was developed in consultation with the DEP and the Waters and Rivers Commission.

As part of the closure and rehabilitation of the Beenup mine, BHP Billiton developed a groundwater management strategy in consultation with the DEP and the Water and Rivers Commission. This strategy outlines the progressive management approach being implemented by BHP Billiton to address this groundwater issue. The groundwater management strategy is reported on annually.

- (2) The acid sulphate plume emanating from the Trial Mine comprised of the Trial Pit and the Bulk Sample area, covers an area of approximately 23 hectares. The extent of the plume is accurately described in the June 2000 BHP Minerals - Beenup Mine Closure Annual Environmental Report (Sect 7.1.3 and Appendix 8), which is a public document.
- (3) The sulphate plume emanating from the former Bulk Sample area is approximately 1.5km from the Scott River, as determined from the groundwater monitoring program. Modelling predictions conducted, as part of the BHP Billiton Beenup groundwater management strategy, estimate that this plume will take approximately 150 years to intercept the Scott River.
- (4) The documents containing the most recently available monitoring results are in the public domain. I now table a copy of the 'Audit of Progress Towards Closure and Rehabilitation of BHP Billiton's Beenup Minesite' prepared by the Beenup Consultative Group. [See paper No 188.]

In addition, a groundwater monitoring review conducted by consultants for the Beenup Mine was submitted to the DEP in July 2001 and is available from the BHP Billiton's Beenup Operation.