

HEMP — ASBESTOS CONTAMINATION

580. Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Environment:

I refer the minister to the increasing body of scientific research suggesting that the hemp plant is an effective tool in dealing with organic pollutants, and the eco-restoration of polluted industrial sites, including those contaminated with asbestos, due to the plant's phyto-remedial properties.

- (1) Is the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions aware of and actively monitoring this research; and, if not, why not?
- (2) Specifically in relation to Wittenoom and the asbestos contamination found there, will the department consider inviting researchers to undertake small-scale trials in the first instance to see whether growing hemp crops on that contaminated land can effectively degrade asbestos contamination over time?

Hon DARREN WEST replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question. On behalf of the Minister for Environment, I provide the following answer.

- (1) The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation is not prescriptive with regard to remediation technologies. Proponents may identify remediation technologies on a case-by-case basis. DWER then undertakes an assessment of the effectiveness of the proposed technology, including research literature reviews. Any technology must be able to demonstrate its potential effectiveness with regard to local conditions.
- (2) This question should be directed to the Minister for Lands.