

Question on Notice

No. 340

Asked on Thursday, 21 March 2024

MS S BOLTON ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF AND MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND INNOVATION (HON L LINARD)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the NSW Environmental Protection Agency addressing asbestos found in mulch in that state, and with Queensland now confirming 25 cases—

Will the Minister release the date for establishing an independent Environmental Protection Authority for Queensland that is needed to address major issues impacting our communities?

ANSWER:

The Queensland Government committed to investigating and consulting on the establishment of an independent Environmental Protection Agency to protect our environment, create jobs and support economic growth.

As part of the investigation, the views of the Queensland public, stakeholders and industry were sought through extensive consultation. Responses from this consultation have now been analysed and it is now a matter for the Government to consider prior to a final decision being made.

The Department of Environment, Science and Innovation operates as Queensland's environmental regulator and recently coordinated a joint proactive inspection program with the Asbestos Safety Unit of Workplace Health and Safety Queensland, following recent reports of asbestos in mulch in New South Wales.

The consideration of an independent Environmental Protection Agency does not impede the environmental regulator currently taking strong action in relation to these matters, which was demonstrated through a number of compliance tools that were issued following detections of asbestos in waste facilities.