

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 1549

asked on Wednesday, 29 October 2008

MR SEENEY ASKED THE MINISTER FOR MINES AND ENERGY (MR WILSON)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the imposition of the new Safety and Health Levy on 1 October 2008—

What is the maximum annual fee an organisation employing 10 or fewer employees would be liable for and what increased fee would that organisation incur by employing one extra contractor for only 15 days?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for his question.

Nothing is more important than the safety and health of men and women who work in Queensland's mines. The industry safety and health levy will boost the services provided by the state's mine safety watchdog, the Mines Inspectorate.

The Inspectorate provides vital safety and health services that help save lives and nothing is more important than that.

The Bligh Government is asking for \$26 million from an industry that was worth \$26 billion to Qld in 2006/2007.

Taxpayers should not have to foot the bill for these vital safety and health services.

We have the best mine safety legislation in Australia and it must continue to be enforced mine by mine, employer by employer, worker by worker. That's where the Mines Inspectorate steps in. This new levy will fund 7 new specialist mines inspectors, 2 investigators, 5 scientific research staff, an occupational hygienist, a statistician and a manager of health surveillance.

I am confident that industry will see the logic in a safety and health levy. Queensland has one of the best mine safety and health records in the world. It is in everyone's best interests to keep it that way.

With reference to the Safety and Health Levy I have been advised by my Department that:

- (1) The maximum annual fee for an organisation employing 10 or fewer employees is \$100.00 per person plus GST.

- (2) An organisation employing 10 or fewer employees that employed an extra contractor for 15 days in a year would need to report the hours worked if the contractor worked more than 14 days in a single three month reporting period. Employee and contractor numbers are calculated on the basis of full time equivalents, which are calculated using 500 hours per quarter as the base. Accordingly, the organisation would not be liable for any increase in fees as the total hours worked would be considerably less than one full time equivalent.