

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 586

asked on Wednesday, 21 August 2013

MR JUDGE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE PROTECTION (MR POWELL)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the Federal Government's Community Affairs References Committee report about the impacts on health of air quality in Australia—

Will the Minister confirm whether the Newman Government will uphold the specific recommendation to require industry to implement covers on all coal wagon fleets?

ANSWER:

The Newman Government will systematically assess this report and carefully work through all the recommendations. This government will not pursue ideological agendas, instead making decisions guided by scientific data.

The Government has established a cross-agency working group which has designed and implemented a comprehensive dust monitoring program for the Western-Metropolitan rail system. The monitoring program is being performed by independent air quality experts from the Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Sciences Branch of the Department of Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts.

In combination with this monitoring, in Queensland, industry is also committed to veneering all coal loads by the end of 2013. The outcomes of these monitoring programs will deliver the baseline data that will help us establish a way forward.