

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Mrs Lambley to the Chief Minister:

Climate and the Environment

1. What is the Northern Territory Government doing to reduce carbon emissions across its own activities?
2. Does the Northern Territory Government have an overall climate policy beyond the much anticipated Roadmap to Renewables?
3. What conversations have been had between the Northern Territory Government and the Federal Government about the proposed Chandler salt mine and permanent toxic and hazardous waste storage facility?
4. Is the Chief Minister concerned about the possibility of the Tellus facility becoming a trojan horse for a nuclear waste repository?
5. Has the Northern Territory Government considered the potential costs of security for the Chandler facility after its initial proposed 29 year life?

Answer:

1. The Government has a number of initiatives aimed at reducing its own carbon emissions including, but not limited to:

A roadmap to renewables expert panel which will advise on the best way to achieve the target of 50% renewable energy by 2030;

\$5m over three years to develop a centre for excellence in solar energy to be based in Alice Springs;

\$1.5m over three years for renewable energy research by CAT and CDU;

\$5 million to fund the installation of rooftop solar to a wide range of school buildings across the Northern Territory; and

Various energy efficiency programs across different agencies.

2. The Government is currently developing a Climate Change Framework and will shortly be seeking input from the community prior to its finalisation. The Roadmap to Renewables Report and the Government's response to it will be integral to the Climate Change Framework.
3. The Chandler waste storage facility is being assessed under the *Environmental Assessment Act* by the Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority (NT EPA). The Environment Division of the

Department of Environment and Natural Resources is supporting the NT EPA in its assessment. Throughout the assessment of the proposal, the Environment Division has had numerous discussions with the Australian Government Department of Environment and Energy regarding the assessment and regulation of the Chandler facility.

4. Tellus Holdings Limited is proposing to develop and operate the Chandler Facility (Charlotte North Site) and waste storage facilities within the Maryvale Station Pastoral Lease.

The Proponent is proposing to access the resource by constructing a decline down to an approximate depth of 750 metres. Upon reaching the resource, mechanical excavation will be undertaken to create a series of chambers within the deposit from which rock salt will be extracted. The proposal also includes construction of an underground waste storage facility that involves emplacement of a variety of non-mining wastes and construction of an above-ground waste storage and transfer facility.

This proposal is currently being considered by the Environment Protection Agency. Further information may be obtained from the Minister for Environment and Natural Resources.

5. The Northern Territory has the ability to obtain a financial security from Tellus for the Chandler Salt project under conditions imposed under the *Mining Management Act*.

The waste storage components of the Chandler facility will require licensing under the *Waste Management and Pollution Control Act* which is administered by the Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority (NT EPA). The Act enables the NT EPA to impose conditions requiring a financial assurance on the Chandler facility. The costs of such a financial assurance will be considered by the NT EPA prior to the issue of any approvals.

Therefore, should waste storage continue after the conclusion of mining at the site, the Northern Territory Government will still have the capacity to retain a financial security over the approved activities.

The Department of Primary Industry and Resources and the NT EPA will be consulting to ensure that an appropriate level of security is maintained throughout the life of the project.