

Question on notice no. 10

Portfolio question number: SQ23-001636

2023-24 Supplementary Budget estimates

Environment and Communications Committee, Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water Portfolio

Senator Gerard Rennick: asked the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water on 23 October 2023—

Senator RENNICK: ... I've asked a question about bisphenol A in wind turbines. Is there epoxy resin in wind turbines blades—yes or no?

Mr Fredericks: I'm pretty sure there's no-one at this table that can answer that question. I have a sneaking suspicion we will probably need to take that on notice.

Senator RENNICK: Okay. I was told in a former answer that it wasn't used, but my understanding of it is that bisphenol A is used in the epoxy resin that goes on wind turbines. It's an essential ingredient of the resins that is used on wind turbines. If that breaks down, which it does over time, and if that gets into the water, especially for offshore wind turbines, that can damage our marine life, which wouldn't be good, would it?

Mr Fredericks: Fair enough. That's an important question. I want to answer that well for you, so we'll take that on notice.

Answer —

Please see attached answer.

Environment and Communications
Answers to questions on notice
Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water Portfolio

Question No: SQ23-001636
Hearing: Supplementary Budget Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 2
Division/Agency: Electricity Division
Topic: Bisphenol A used in epoxy resin
Hansard Page: 20
Question Date: 23 October 2023
Question Type: Spoken

Senator Rennick asked:

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Answer:

1. The responses previously provided to the Supplementary Budget Estimates written question of 23 February 2023 and Budget Estimates written question of 9 June 2023 are correct. That is:
 - a. epoxy resins are used to manufacture wind turbine blades; and
 - b. there is no evidence in Australia or internationally that erosion of epoxy resins from wind turbines leads to significant Bisphenol A (BPA) emissions.
2. BPA is used to make epoxy resins which are then used to manufacture wind turbine blades. BPA is chemically transformed in the process of making the epoxy resin and is irreversibly bound into the matrix of the epoxy in the turbine blades. This means it cannot leach or wash out of the turbine blades.