

ROCK ART SITE DAMAGE

569. Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE to the minister representing the Minister for Indigenous Affairs:

Mr President —

The PRESIDENT: Order! Members, just by way of explanation, Hon Robin Chapple is a new member. Asking a question does not constitute a maiden speech, because that has to be made in a substantive debate. A question is not a substantive debate.

Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE: I refer to the incidents of cultural material destruction and damage on the Burrup articulated in *The Age* of 28 May 2009 in an article titled “Concern over damage to rock art sites”.

- (1) How and when was the Department of Indigenous Affairs advised of the incursion and damage to artefacts and carvings on the CEMEX Australia tenements M47/333, M47/306, M47/309, M47/331, M47/353 and M47/26?
- (2) On what date was the damage approximated as having been done?
- (3) Were any section 18s lodged with the Aboriginal Cultural Material Committee in respect of any of the sites in these tenements and did the ACMC deliberate?

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of this question. It is a pity it does not qualify as a maiden speech, because I enjoyed it much more than the maiden speech he made eight years ago; I think it was that aspect of brevity.

The Minister for Indigenous Affairs has provided the following answer —

- (1) On 26 November 2008, the Department of Indigenous Affairs was formally notified by CEMEX via email that its quarry operations had expanded into the federal national heritage listed conservation zone. The mining tenements in question are M47/255, M47/306, M47/309 and M47/353. The area has been national heritage listed as it contains numerous registered Aboriginal heritage sites, and the presence of further unidentified heritage artefacts and rock art engravings is likely. The state Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972 protects all Aboriginal heritage sites in Western Australia, whether currently identified or not.
- (2) The quarry expansion occurred during the months of September and October 2008.
- (3) No.