

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**  
**Question on notice**

14 AUG 2012

**Tuesday, 12 June 2012**

5627. Hon Robin Chapple to the Minister for Mental Health representing the Minister for Environment.

With regard to question on notice No. 5328 to the Minister for Environment answered on Tuesday, 15 May 2012 and question on notice No. 5327 to the Minister for Indigenous Affairs answered on Tuesday, 15 May 2012, I ask --

- (1) Why was the department not aware of the activity occurring in the areas of 'very significant cultural heritage importance' that are outside of the footprint shown in Figure 3 that are meant to be protected from any potential impact of the Pluton proposal?
- (2) On whose authority was the drilling of environmental monitoring bores within the central portion of E04/1172 carried out?
- (3) For what purposes was the drilling of environmental monitoring bores within the central portion of E04/1172 carried out?
- (4) On what date was the drilling of environmental monitoring bores within the central portion of E04/1172 carried out?

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**Answer**

- (1) The Office of the Environmental Protection Authority has advised that there has been no ground disturbance activities in the Cultural Heritage Protection Area in the Referral Document dated August 2011.
- (2-4) It is understood that the response provided by the Minister for Indigenous Affairs was referring to a previous consent given by the then Minister for Indigenous Affairs in November 2010. This consent related to activities within the boundary of Exploration Licence 04/1172 administered by the Department of Mines and Petroleum (DMP). This Exploration Licence covers the whole of Irvine Island and the drilling activities were not within the Cultural Heritage Protection Area. The November 2010 consent predates the referral of the proposal to the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) in August 2011. The proponent is able to undertake activities on an Exploration Licence provided that it has the necessary approvals. These activities can include obtaining environmental information, such as groundwater investigations, that can then inform the proposal that is referred to the EPA and the likely environmental issues.

