

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Question on notice

Tuesday, 6 May 2014

1106. Hon Robin Chappie to the Attorney General representing the Minister for Emergency Services.

I refer to the *Your Guide to the 2013/2014 Fire Season* from the City of Swan that can be found at: <http://www.robinchapple.com/qdata> which outlines that Building Protections Zones (BPZs) are required around all buildings/structures of 20 metres; no vegetation above five centimetres allowed within a 20 metres perimeter of any building/ structure beyond this initial 20 metres perimeter, and a further 80 metres BPZ perimeter where vegetation is maintained at or below the rate of 8 tonnes per hectare, and I ask:

- (a) has the City of Swan starting enforcing these bush fire regulations;
 - (b) if yes to (a), on what date did this start;
 - (c) must residents in the area comply with these guidelines if they wish planning permission to be approved for either an addition, shed, or to commence building a new home; and
 - (d) from the currently proposed bush fire protection measures:
 - (i) what is the extent of land clearing;
 - (ii) what is the impact on wildlife; and
 - (iii) what is the impact of soil erosion?
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The Department of Fire and Emergency Services advises that the matters raised relate to bushfire guidelines and planning approval policies of the City of Swan and should be referred to that authority.

The Department of Fire and Emergency Services can however advise that the purpose of the Building Protections Zones in all regions of Western Australia where there is a fire threat is to reduce flammable fuel in the immediate vicinity of structures and other assets to reduce the bushfire attack level in accord with Australian Standard AS3959 section 2. The requirements for Building Protections Zones within Western Australia for new buildings are specified in "Planning for Bushfire Protection guidelines edition 2" Element 4. Maintained gardens are not classed as flammable for the defensible space. Areas such as pathways, drives, lawn, vegetable gardens, pools etc. all serve to reduce fire intensity and will form an integral part of any Building Protections Zones. The effectiveness of these in reducing the risk of fire damage to a building is enhanced if these areas are close to the building.

