

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

C791

QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE  
(Of which some notice has been given)

Tuesday, 12 August 2014

Hon Robin Chapple to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs.

I refer to the recent spate of vandalism on the Burrup Peninsular and the failure of Department of Aboriginal Affairs (DAA) staff to stop this and ask:

1. How many DAA staff are in place on the Burrup to manage and protect the National Heritage listed petroglyphs?
2. If none, why not?
3. If none, how does DAA expect to prosecute offenders?
4. With reference to the Murujuga National Park Management Plan 2013, page 11, has the DAA provided training, advice, and enforcement capability in the area of Aboriginal Heritage Protection?
5. If no to (4), why not?
6. With reference to the Murujuga National Park Management Plan 2013, page 11, has relevant and appropriate powers vested in the DAA for the protection of heritage sites been transferred to the rangers employed to manage Murujuga National Park?
7. If no to (6), why not?

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**I thank the Hon. Member for some notice of this question.**

1. No staff are located permanently on the Burrup. The Department of Aboriginal Affairs is not aware of a "recent spate of vandalism" in the Burrup. The graffiti that has been reported to date has been historic in nature and are outside the 12 month prosecution limitation. As Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation's rangers are patrolling, more historic graffiti is being located and reported.

2. The Department of Aboriginal Affairs heritage compliance function can be effectively serviced from Perth and its five regional offices. The Department of Aboriginal Affairs continues to work with the Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation to ensure that damage caused by graffiti is minimised and protection of heritage is achieved. The Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation's Rangers are ideally placed to look after heritage, with support from departmental staff.

3. The Department of Aboriginal Affairs prosecutes offenders through the appropriate investigation of complaints. The proposed amendments to the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* will significantly enhance enforcement provisions. The current draft Aboriginal Heritage Amendment Bill includes an increase in penalties, from \$20,000 to \$100,000

for an individual (first offence) and \$50,000 to \$500,000 for a body corporate (first offence). It also includes an increase in the time available to prosecute and increased involvement of Aboriginal people in the way Aboriginal heritage is managed.

4. The Department of Aboriginal Affairs is currently working with the Murujuga Park Council, Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation and other government agencies to progress this.

5. Not applicable.

6. The Department of Aboriginal Affairs is discussing this proposal with the Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation.

7. Not applicable.



**Minister for Aboriginal Affairs**