

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Question on notice

Thursday, 19 November 2015

3754. Hon Robin Chappie to the Attorney General representing the Minister for Emergency Services.

I refer to question on notice No. 3366 asked in the Legislative Council on 8 September 2015 by Hon Robin Chappie to the Minister for Mental Health representing the Minister for Environment, and the proposed Class A Nature Reserve, bounded on the North and West by the Derby Mudflats, on the East by Leprosarium Road and on the South by the Gibb River Road and to a bush fire during early July during which firebreaks were cut, and ask:

- (a) was the use of graders and/or bulldozers to cut a six kilometre internal firebreak allowed by the Department of Environment and Conservation;
- (b) if yes to (a), who authorised the operation and why;
- (c) what environmental effects have there been on the Pliestocene Wanganut sand dunes and surrounding mature pristine native bush as a result of these largely ineffectual fire breaks being cut;
- (d) will the area be rehabilitated;
- (e) if yes to (d), when will it be rehabilitated; and
- (f) if no to (d), why not?

The Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) advises:

- a) No. The construction of the identified breaks was authorised by a Fire Control Officer in accordance with the *Bush Fires Act 1954*, in consultation with the Regional Duty Coordinator from the Department of Fire and Emergency Services.
- b) Not applicable.
- c) DFES is not in a position to comment with respect to environmental impact.
- d) DFES is not aware of any plans to intervene in the natural rehabilitation of the established breaks.
- e) Not applicable.
- f) There are no plans to rehabilitate the established breaks due to the natural regeneration anticipated. The newly established breaks would also serve to greatly assist firefighters in conducting fire suppression activities on the Reserve in the future, thus enabling the responders a capacity to minimise prolonged and repeated fire impact on the flora and fauna located on the identified parcel of land and further potential to impact life and property in the community.

