

# HON. ROBIN CHAPPLE MLC

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## **Greens MLC Robin Chapple deeply saddened at news of ancient indigenous shelters destroyed**

WA Greens Member for Mining and Pastoral Region, Robin Chapple MLC has condemned the actions of Rio Tinto earlier this week in their destruction of an indigenous site whilst carrying out explosive works in the Pilbara.

Mr Chapple, who has carriage of both indigenous affairs and mining said of the incident;

*“For the last 20 years the process for protecting aboriginal sites in Western Australia has been woeful, I would have hoped under leadership of Ben Wyatt as Aboriginal Affairs Minister things would have improved.*

*“I am deeply saddened by the news that there has been further destruction of culturally important sites in the Pilbara dating back over 40,000 years.*

*“I am incensed that the battle I waged during the last Liberal government seems to be ongoing with this Labor government”*

On 18 March of 2020 Mr Chapple asked the Minister how many aboriginal sites had been protected via the section 18 approval process. The Minister answered that there had been 463 section 18 applications to impact aboriginal heritage sites and none of these had been declined, it appears that these sites in Juukan Gorge may have been amongst these sites that were granted for impact by the Minister.

*“When will WA governments live up to their responsibility to protect and respect aboriginal cultural heritage, the oldest heritage in the world, Australia’s heritage”*

Federal Greens Senator Rachel Siewert stated:

*“This is appalling and I am deeply upset for the Puutu Kunti Kurrama and Pinikura people who have been treated with such blatant disregard and disrespect. The State Government must account for the processes that allowed this to happen.*

*I cannot imagine a European artefact of such cultural significance being destroyed like this”*

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14 MAY 2020

## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL Question On Notice

Wednesday, 18 March 2020

**2878. Hon Robin Chapple to the Minister for Environment representing the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs**

I refer to the procedures and approvals of works under section 18 of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972*, by the Aboriginal Cultural Material Committee (ACMC), and I ask:

- (a) can the Minister confirm how many section 18 notices for land that is described as a mining lease, were bought before the ACMC, since 1 July 2010; and
- (b) of the section 18 notices pertaining to mining leases, how many have been declined in the same period (as of 1 July 2010), by the Minister?

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**Answer**

(a) 463

(b) Nil. This confirms what I have consistently highlighted, the obligations under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* are not an impediment to the effective operations of the mining industry, particularly where mining companies enter into positive consultations with traditional owners.



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MINISTER FOR ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS