

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION — PUBLIC MEETINGS POLICY

287. Hon SALLY TALBOT to the minister representing the Minister for Environment:

- (1) Does the minister, or the director general of his department, have a policy relating to the attendance of departmental officers from any of his agencies to speak at public or community meetings on environmental issues; and, if yes, what is that policy?
- (2) Does the minister or the director general of his department allow departmental officers from any of his agencies to exercise their own discretion in accepting offers to speak at public or community meetings on environmental issues?
- (3) Has the minister or the director general of his department refused any requests by departmental officers from any of his agencies to speak at public or community meetings on environmental issues in the past six weeks?

Hon HELEN MORTON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of this question.

The Minister for Environment has provided the following advice. The matter raised in the question falls within the responsibility of the Director General of the Department of Environment and Conservation.

- (1) Yes. The code of conduct for the Department of Environment and Conservation sets out policy relating to departmental officers who attend or speak at a public or community meeting.
- (2) If the officer is attending a meeting in a private capacity and the meeting has relevance to departmental business, then the code of conduct requires the officer to address any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest before attending. The code has a process to allow a quick response by the department in urgent cases. An officer who is attending a meeting in an official capacity has delegated authority to speak at the meeting.
- (3) No.