

Question without notice 1105 asked by Hon Simon O'Brien on Wednesday, 21 November reads as follows

I refer to an incident early on Saturday morning when a recreational vessel crashed into an unlit channel marker on the Canning River.

- (1) What advice has the minister subsequently received about the need to install lights on channel markers in the Swan and Canning Rivers?
- (2) Is it true that, prior to its disbandment, the State Boating Council expressed its concern to government about safety issues, including the absence of lights on navigational aids?
- (3) Has the minister previously been briefed on the issue or received representations about the issue from -
 - (a) the then Chairman of the State Boating Council, Hon Fred Riebeling, MLA;
 - (b) the director, marine safety, or other senior officers of the Department for Planning and Infrastructure;
 - (c) Boating Western Australia; or
 - (d) any other party?

HON SALLY TALBOT (Parliamentary Secretary): On behalf of the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure, I can advise Hon Simon O'Brien that the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure has provided an answer in the following terms -

- (1) As the member may know, an investigation of this incident by water police and the Department for Planning and Infrastructure's investigations team is underway. The department will report the findings and any interim recommendations of this investigation to the minister for her consideration. The minister has received information regarding the current situation concerning navigation markers on the Swan and Canning Rivers. For the member's information, there are a total of 75 navigation aids on the Canning River, which are passively lit by reflective tape or reflectors. No commercial vessels operate on the Canning River. On the Swan River, where commercial traffic operates, 49 of the 212 navigation markers are lit, and the remainder are passively lit.
- (2) As part of its deliberations, the State Boating Council considered a number of issues related to boating safety. In 2003, Boating Western Australia wrote to the State Boating Council expressing its dissatisfaction regarding the lack of lighting on specific markers in the Swan River in Rocky Bay and at Karrakatta bank. The letter was tabled and the issue was discussed. The State Boating Council resolved that Boating Western Australia be advised to use the lit channel at Rocky Bay, and that Karrakatta bank was no longer considered an issue, as it was pointed out that a lit passage already existed for safe navigation. There is no indication of the council raising the issue of lights on navigational aids in the broader sense.
- (3) The minister is regularly briefed by the department on boating and marine safety issues. However, she has not been specifically briefed by the department, or other parties, on the issue of the need for lights on navigational aids in the Canning River.