

WESTERN POWER — MANDURAH STORM — RESPONSE

403. Hon SALLY TALBOT to the Minister for Energy:

I refer to the destructive storm that hit Mandurah on Sunday, 10 June 2012, blacking out households in Meadow Springs, Dudley Park, Halls Head, Coodanup, Falcon, Greenfields, Madora Bay, Wannanup and central Mandurah —

- (1) Is the minister aware of local media reports quoting the Mandurah State Emergency Service manager saying, “Our biggest problem was power. Western Power were being evasive”?
- (2) What are the procedures followed by Western Power for responding to SES requests to have the power switched off before they go into a house?
- (3) Were these procedures followed during this storm and its aftermath?
- (4) Does the minister concede that Western Power did not work cooperatively with the SES in Mandurah during this storm?
- (5) How will the minister ensure that the problems caused by Western Power to the SES during this storm do not occur in the future?

Hon PETER COLLIER replied:

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

- (1) I am aware of one report, not reports in the plural, quoting the Mandurah State Emergency Service manager. I note that the Fire and Emergency Services Authority is seeking to clarify the comments made by the SES manager. FESA has subsequently confirmed the strong and close working relationship it has with Western Power. FESA regards Western Power’s response to this once-in-a-decade storm event as first-class.
- (2) In an emergency situation the SES call Western Power’s emergency response line and report a hazard. Western Power’s control centre staff dispatch crews to attend to hazards. Since Sunday afternoon, Western Power managed more than 7 900 network-related incidents and 3 439 hazards.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) No; Western Power and FESA worked very effectively through the crisis.
- (5) We do not accept that Western Power caused problems, but it is normal practice that Western Power and FESA will hold a formal debrief of the storm response to identify continuous improvement opportunities.