

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION — BUSHFIRE-PRONE AREAS

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

I refer to recommendation 3 of the Keelty report on the Perth hills bushfire and the advice to the stakeholders' briefing in October 2011 that planning was underway to "work with WALGA, FESA, DEC and DAFWA to clarify the definition of 'bushfire prone' and the requirements pursuant to a declaration".

- (1) How does DEC define "bushfire prone"?
- (2) Was this definition changed after the Perth hills fire or the Margaret River bushfires?
- (3) Has any decision been made as to which agency has the expertise to assess areas as "bushfire prone"?
- (4) If yes to (3), what were the outcomes?
- (5) What steps has DEC taken to date to enable the transfer of responsibilities for declaring bushfire-prone areas to the Western Australian Planning Commission?

**Hon HELEN MORTON replied:**

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. I note that the question was asked on 7 March so this answer is current as at that date.

- (1)–(5) The Keelty report on the Perth hills bushfire notes that under the Local Government Act 1995 local governments may declare all or parts of their local government area to be a bushfire-prone area. It further notes that a designated bushfire-prone area is defined under the National Construction Code as "land designated under a power in legislation as being subject, or likely to be subject, to bushfires". Action on recommendation 3 of the report is being progressed by the Bushfire Review Implementation Group convened by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and on which DEC is represented. However, DEC does not have responsibility for the definition of "bushfire prone" or for the implementation of recommendation 3.