

WAROONA–YARLOOP BUSHFIRES — ASSISTANCE

371. Hon SALLY TALBOT to the Attorney General representing the Minister for Emergency Services:

- (1) Were offers of assistance from fire units from Boddington, Northcliffe, Leschenault and Manjimup rejected during the Waroona–Yarloop bushfire?
- (2) If yes to (1), on whose authority were these offers of assistance rejected?

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN replied:

On behalf of the Minister for Emergency Services, I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. The Department of Fire and Emergency Services advises —

- (1)–(2) Bush fire brigades from the Shires of Northcliffe, Harvey—Leschenault bush fire brigade—and Manjimup attended the Waroona complex fire incident in some capacity over the extended duration of this incident. However, it is not possible in the time frame given to determine whether offers of assistance from these bush fire brigades may have been declined at various times, as the Waroona complex fire was a significant, extended bushfire with multiple agencies and brigades involved from different regions. Bush fire brigades frequently offer their assistance; however, these offers must be balanced against the operational needs at a given moment. Considerations may include whether sufficient resources were available at the time of the offer, the need to leave sufficient resources within a region in the event of an incident occurring in that region and whether the bush fire brigades were being fatigue managed. Although bush fire brigades are always willing to assist, this is sometimes to their own detriment. The Department of Fire and Emergency Services must ensure their safety and wellbeing.