

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION —
INCOME FROM ENVIRONMENTAL OFFSET PROGRAMS

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

I refer the minister to the income that the Department of Environment and Conservation receives for environmental offset programs.

- (1) How much has DEC received, and from whom, for each of the following years —
 - (a) 2008–09;
 - (b) 2009–10; and
 - (c) 2010–11 to date?
- (2) What was this money spent on?
- (3) How will this money be used?
- (4) Does DEC have an offset policy; and, if so, will the minister table it?

Hon HELEN MORTON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of this question. The Minister for Environment has provided the following information —

- (1)–(3) Offsets may arise in a number of settings, and DEC’s role may be as a regulator setting offsets as a condition of a clearing permit, receiving offset funds from projects assessed by the Environmental Protection Authority or assisting proponents to meet conditions set by the commonwealth under the commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act. There is currently no single register of offsets across all business areas. I table as an attachment information on offset funds received by DEC in 2008–09 and 2009–10. Information for 2010–11 has not been compiled.
- (4) DEC has a guide to developing a clearing permit offset proposal available on its website and which I table. The Environmental Protection Authority has position statement 9, guidance statement 19 and environmental protection bulletin 1, which relate to environmental offsets. I also table these policies. Through the Directors General Working Group on approvals, development and sustainability, a whole-of-government policy on environmental offsets is in development. One of the commitments of this policy is a public register that will contain consolidated records of environmental offsets and meet government, community and industry expectations for transparency and accountability.

[See papers 3317 and 3318.]