

ROTTNEST ISLAND — BALLOT BOOKING SYSTEM

1018. Ms L.L. Baker to the Minister for Tourism:

I refer to the removal of the Rottnest Island ballot booking system, which came into effect on 22 July 2013, and ask:

- (a) can the Minister confirm that appropriate consultation was undertaken ahead of the decision to phase out the ballot booking system;
- (b) what was the nature and scope of this consultation;
- (c) what were the reasons for the decision to transition away from the Island's traditional accommodation booking system;
- (d) will the Minister please table the full results of the research and consultation that took place in relation to this decision, and if not, why not;
- (e) what was the number of applications per ballot for the years 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012; and
- (f) will there be any ongoing research and consultation taking place to measure the success of the new system?

Mrs L.M. Harvey replied:

- (a) Ballots have been gradually eliminated since 1989 and prior to this, all accommodation on Rottnest Island was balloted. This year's changes were the final step in the removal of the last seven weeks of balloted accommodation, following consultation.
- (b) The Rottnest Island Authority carried out extensive market research both qualitative and quantitative in June 2012, amongst visitors and non-visitors. The RIA commissioned an external research company (TNS) to do the research. This research included online surveys and focus groups.

Numerous complaints were also received from the public, media and Members of Parliament over the years who questioned the fairness of the ballot system, all of which contributed to the decision to remove it.

- (c) The reasons for the decision to transition away from the Island's balloted accommodation booking system included:
 - diminishing number of applications year on year;
 - to bring the RIA in line with standard national and international booking systems and operate on the same basis 365 days per year;
 - to allow the public on a first come first serve basis to book accommodation on-line, in person or by telephone on an Island that is in high demand;
 - to eliminate the perception that the ballot was "unfair"; and
 - to counter the view that you could not book accommodation at any time during the year as it was always balloted.

(d) [See paper 748.]

(e) Number of Summer & Easter Ballot applications received from 2008 to 2012

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Summer	5573	5092	4403	3356	3174
Easter	2532	1702	1458	1678	872

- (f) The transition from ballots to the standard booking process has occurred smoothly and the RIA will continue to monitor visitor feedback. The key measure will be from the public advising the RIA of any issues they experience when trying to book accommodation during peak periods. If any concerns are identified they will be addressed accordingly. The RIA's objective is to make the booking process as pleasant and smooth as possible and encourage repeat visitation to Rottnest Island.