

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND WILDLIFE — BURN-OFF TARGETS

644. Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE to the Minister for Environment:

I have a supplementary question. What percentage of the target for 2013 has been completed and how much of that burning is directed at protecting life and property?

Mr A.P. JACOB replied:

As I have already said, this fire season is only just starting.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Cannington! I am not going to allow any more interjections on this topic. Can the minister just answer the question as quickly as possible?

Mr A.P. JACOB: I should apologise; I was operating under the assumption that members understood that the reporting periods are actually financial years, so we are only just commencing this one. As we come out of winter, we have had a very wet spring, as members would have noticed when they went outside. Weather conditions are only now reaching the point at which we can start tackling our prescribed burning program.

Mr C.J. Tallentire: How much is targeted at areas where there are lives and properties at risk?

The SPEAKER: Member for Gosnells, I call you to order for the first time.

Mr A.P. JACOB: There are 147 prescribed burns on our candidate program; we are rolling them out now. Obviously, our first consideration is the protection of communities —

Mr W.J. Johnston interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Cannington!

Mr A.P. JACOB: — and property. We will be targeting —

Mr M. McGowan interjected.

Mr A.P. JACOB: Absolutely; it is the lives that matter. Incidentally, in previous years when there may have been a drop-off, we hit an exponential. There is a lot more involved in this than just a hectare target. It is not that simple. We accept a hectare target. I do not know what is the policy of members opposite on prescribed burning. They clearly do not even know what the reporting periods are. But we are ramping up into this season.