

MAIN ROADS — ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY STATEMENT

5807. Hon Giz Watson to the Minister for Finance representing the Minister for Transport

I refer to Main Roads' Environmental Policy Statement insofar as it applies to clearing of native vegetation, and I ask —

- (1) Regarding the objective 'Apply an approach of 'avoid, minimise and mitigate', in order of preference, to the management of environmental impacts associated with road construction projects', will the Minister please name and table all written policies and procedures Main Roads has to guide the exercise of its discretion whether and how to avoid clearing of native vegetation, whether and how to minimise it, whether and how to mitigate it, and between those three options?
- (2) If no to (1), why not?
- (3) Of the documents tabled in answer to (1), are any currently under review?
- (4) If yes to (3), will the Minister please provide full details including —
 - (a) the terms of reference;
 - (b) the process for stakeholder consultation including environmental specialist groups;
 - (c) the due date for completion of the review;
 - (d) whether the reviewed document will be made public, and if so, how; and
 - (e) if no to (4)(d), why the reviewed document will not be made public?
- (5) Regarding the objective 'Listen and be responsive to community and stakeholder views on environmental issues' —
 - (a) will the Minister please table all written policies, procedures and guidelines Main Roads has that apply to community and stakeholder consultation on clearing of native vegetation;
 - (b) if no to (5)(a), why not;
 - (c) to assist stakeholders including environmental specialist groups to reach informed views, does Main Roads make the following information publicly available, and if so, how —
 - (i) full details of native vegetation clearing that has occurred;
 - (ii) full terms of the clearing permit (including any appendices) or other authorisation applicable to that clearing;
 - (iii) full details of any non-compliance with that permit/authorisation (whether or not disclosure is mandated by legislation), including the response (whether by Main Roads or other agency such as the Department for Environment and Conservation) to that non-compliance;
 - (d) if no to any of (5)(c), why is this information not made publicly available;
 - (e) will the Minister please provide full details of community and stakeholder consultation that has occurred, is occurring, or will occur regarding renewal of Main Roads' purpose permit to clear native vegetation associated with major projects that is due to expire in December; and
 - (f) regarding the answer to (5)(e), which of these occurred before Main Roads made a decision on what terms it would seek for the permit (including any changes from the terms in the current permit), and how was the feedback from that consultation taken into account by Main Roads in reaching its decision?

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN replied:

Main Roads WA advises:

- (1) Main Roads uses corporate procedures in regard to assessing vegetation clearing. These are internal Main Roads working documents to provide guidance only to the agency's staff.
- (2) Refer to (1) above.
- (3) Not applicable
- (4) (a)–(e) Not applicable

- (5) (a) I am prepared to table Main Roads' Community Engagement Policy as this is a public document. [See paper 5001.] The other documents are internal Main Roads working documents to provide guidance only to the agency's staff.
- (b) Refer to 5(a).
- (c) (i) No.
- (ii) The permit in question is available for viewing on the Department of Environment and Conservation's website.
- (iii) No.
- (d) Main Roads only reports on the overall total area of vegetation cleared and significant non-compliance on environmental matters.
- (e) Consultation has occurred with the Conservation Council, Wildflower Society and Urban Bushland on 16 March 2012 and 12 July 2012 and a Roadside Conservation Committee representative on 29 March 2012. Further consultation with these groups may occur. It is anticipated that public advertising of proposed amendments to the clearing permit by the Department of Environment and Conservation will provide opportunity for the community and stakeholder input to the permit process.
- (f) Main Roads' experience with its clearing permit over the years helped it form views of how the permit might be amended, and more recent discussions with environmental specialist groups and the Department of Environment and Conservation has contributed to those views.
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