

FISH KILL — BROOME COAST

301. Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE to the Minister for Fisheries:

I refer to the deaths of hundreds of fish along the coast north of Broome between Manari and Gariyan.

- (1) What was the likely cause of this event?
- (2) Is the department investigating this event and will a report be produced?
- (3) Is this event considered a one-off?
- (4) Has an event of this nature been seen in this area before?

Hon KEN BASTON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (1) Available evidence suggests natural causes and higher-than-normal water temperatures are major contributing factors to the fish kill. Local environmental factors such as high air and land temperatures and spring tides may also have contributed.
- (2) Yes. Department of Fisheries staff have been investigating the incident over the past week. This has included conducting surveys of the affected area, taking a range of specialised water and fish tissue analyses and commissioning hydrodynamic modelling. A report on this event will be produced once investigations are completed. This report will be made available on the department's website.
- (3) As the likely cause of the fish kill is still being confirmed, it is not possible to predict whether this event is a one-off.
- (4) Since records began in 1997, there has been only one other, much smaller, marine fish kill event in this area. Anecdotal information from members of the local community also suggests that a fish kill of this size and nature has not been seen in the area for several decades.