

ABORIGINAL HERITAGE ACT 1972 — HELENA AURORA RANGE

349. Hon Robin Chapple to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs:
- (1) Under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972*, how many sites are registered on, or in the near vicinity of, the Helena Aurora Range (Bungalbin) in the Yilgarn Shire:
 - (a) where are these sites;
 - (b) when were they registered; and
 - (c) what is the reported significance of each of them?
 - (2) Has any mining company or its agent sought section 18 consent to destroy, damage or interfere with any Aboriginal site or sites in this area at any time in the past five years:
 - (a) if yes to (2), which company(s);
 - (b) for which sites; and
 - (c) when?
 - (3) Have any site disturbance or destruction approvals (or consents) been given by the department or Minister for Aboriginal Affairs to any mining company in this area in the past five years:
 - (a) if yes to (3), to whom;
 - (b) in relation to which site or sites; and
 - (c) when?
 - (4) Based on departmental records, how many Aboriginal Heritage site surveys have been conducted in this area in the past ten years, and by whom:
 - (a) as a result of these surveys, have any sites been:
 - (i) found; and
 - (ii) registered?
 - (5) Has the mining company Polaris Metals provided any information or reports to the department on:
 - (a) sites it is aware of on, or in the vicinity of, the Helena Aurora Range (Bungalbin);
 - (b) sites it has identified following surveys in the same area; and
 - (c) sites it wishes to destroy or disturb in the same vicinity?
 - (6) Have any officials from the Department of Aboriginal Affairs met with any representatives of Polaris Metals over the past five years:
 - (a) if yes to (6), who were the officers;
 - (b) when did the meeting(s) occur; and
 - (c) what was discussed?
 - (7) Has the department or Minister of Aboriginal Affairs received any advice or reports from the Aboriginal Cultural Materials Committee on the Helena Aurora Range (Bungalbin) area, including in relation to its cultural significance to Aboriginal people or the presence of significant cultural values or sites?

Hon Ken Baston replied:

- (1) There are no registered Aboriginal heritage sites on the Helena Aurora Range, nor are there any within five kilometres of this area.
 - (a)–(c) Not applicable.
- (2) (a)–(c) No. However, Polaris Metals Pty Ltd (Polaris) has sought consent to the use the land which comprised a portion of exploration licence E77/842, which contained Aboriginal heritage places DAA 18726 (Aurora Ranges Women’s Place), DAA 18730 (Helena/Aurora Ranges Gully), DAA 18731 (Helena/Aurora Ranges Engraving), a portion of DAA 18732 (Helena Cave), DAA 20336 (KY19), DAA 20342 (KY28), DAA 29178 (J5 Rockhole 1) and DAA 29179 (J5 Rockhole 2). A notice was submitted under section 18 of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* by Polaris on 28 June 2010. It was withdrawn and subsequently resubmitted on 16 July 2010.
- (3) No.

- (a)–(c) Not applicable.
- (4) The Department of Aboriginal Affairs holds ten Aboriginal heritage site surveys relating to the area. These surveys have been undertaken by Australian Interaction Consultants, R & E O'Connor Pty Ltd and Artefaxion Pty Ltd.
 - (a) (i) Aboriginal heritage places were located as a result of these surveys
 - (ii) None of the places recorded in these reports is a registered site.
- (5) (a) As a component of its section 18 notice, Polaris provided information, including heritage survey reports, about Aboriginal heritage places within the area. None of these places have been assessed to be a site.
 - (b)–(c) Not applicable.
- (6) Yes.
 - (a) The Registrar of Aboriginal Sites, Manager Heritage South and a Senior Heritage Officer.
 - (b) 17 August 2010.
 - (c) The section 18 notice from Polaris was received by the Department on 16 July 2010.
- (7) No.