

VOLUNTEER EMERGENCY SERVICE GROUPS — FUEL CARDS

**829. Hon DARREN WEST to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Regional Development:**

I refer to the announcement in the 2013–14 budget that a \$2 000 fuel card is to be allocated to regional volunteer emergency service groups.

- (1) How many groups have been identified as eligible for the card?
- (2) When will the scheme commence?
- (3) Will the scheme exclude groups currently under the administration of Department of Fire and Emergency Services?
- (4) What is the distinction between emergency service groups in regional areas and those in the metropolitan area that will not receive such support?
- (5) How will the scheme be administered to ensure accountability and transparency?

**Hon COL HOLT replied:**

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

- (1) Current analysis indicates that approximately 846 regional emergency service volunteer brigades, groups and units will be eligible for the card.
- (2) The scheme will commence in 2014–15.
- (3) No.
- (4) Regional areas of Western Australia are as defined in part 2 of the Regional Development Commissions Act 1993. The scheme will be funded by royalties for regions for regional volunteer emergency service groups. The scheme is recognition that while the metropolitan area is covered by a range of professional emergency services, regional areas rely heavily on volunteers, who provide emergency services at great personal cost.
- (5) The fuel card will be used only for the purchase of fuel. Controls to ensure accountability and mechanisms to mitigate the risk of misappropriation will be developed in conjunction with the chosen fuel card provider.