

FARMERS — NATIVE VEGETATION PROTECTION

**54. Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE to the Minister for Environment:**

I refer to comments made by the Premier on Monday, 23 February 2013 that —

One of the most common complaints is the unnecessary regulation and interference in farmers as they go about farming their land —

This was commenting on the protection of native vegetation. What environmental safeguards and protections currently in place does the government intend to remove or water down during this term of government?

**Mr A.P. JACOB replied:**

I congratulate the member opposite on his appointment to the shadow environment portfolio. I look forward to some very robust debates in the four years going forward. I am aware of the comments made on land clearing issues by not only the Premier but also the previous Minister for Environment. Those issues did not come to the surface so much during the election campaign period, but they are certainly issues that we will look at going forward. I am sure the member for Gosnells will understand that an incoming government would like to look at a range of areas. I, as a new minister, am particularly interested at looking at those areas. I noted earlier in the day the member's comments on that space. I was particularly interested in the member's comments on the nature of some of our areas that have a drying climate. That is the reality of what we are dealing with. There may even be some opportunities in and around that. The member made those comments earlier and made note of that in and around salinity. I assure the member that while we will be looking at that, we are in the very early stages. In anything that I look at as environment minister I will seek to ensure that there is a balance. My first priority is to look at the environmental values for not only issues such as salinity but also fauna habitat. Having said that, there may be some regulatory things that we can look at, such as streamlining some processes and making the entire process a bit clearer and easier to understand. Certainly, as I have said, a big priority for me will be to ensure that there is always a very good balance. My first priority is the environmental values, which are going to be upheld through that process.