

Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Bill Marmion; Dr Graham Jacobs; Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Murray Cowper; Mr Fran Logan; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr Ian Blayney; Mrs Liza Harvey; Mr David Templeman

Division 67: Environment and Conservation, \$216 450 000 —

Ms A.R. Mitchell, Chairman.

Mr W.R. Marmion, Minister for Environment.

Mr K.J. McNamara, Director General.

Mr R.P. Atkins, Deputy Director General, Environment.

Mr J. Sharp, Deputy Director General, Parks and Conservation.

Dr J.C. Byrne, Director, Corporate Services.

Mr P.D. Dans, Director, Regional Services.

The CHAIRMAN: This estimates committee will be reported by Hansard staff. The daily proof *Hansard* will be published at 9.00 am tomorrow.

It is the intention of the Chair to ensure that as many questions as possible are asked and answered and that both questions and answers are short and to the point. The estimates committee's consideration of the estimates will be restricted to discussion of those items for which a vote of money is proposed in the consolidated account. Questions must be clearly related to a page number, item program or amount in the current division. It will greatly assist Hansard if members can give these details in preface to their question.

The minister may agree to provide supplementary information to the committee, rather than asking that the question be put on notice for the next sitting week. I ask the minister to clearly indicate what supplementary information he agrees to provide and I will then allocate a reference number. If supplementary information is to be provided, I seek the minister's cooperation in ensuring that it is delivered to the committee clerk by Friday, 8 June 2012. I caution members that if a minister asks that a matter be put on notice, it is up to the member to lodge the question on notice with the Clerk's office.

I now ask the minister to introduce his advisers to the committee.

[Witnesses introduced.]

The CHAIRMAN: Dr Byrne is deaf, but he will receive information through the assisting reporter and the computer and will respond to questions. I ask members to please speak loudly and clearly and to not speak over anyone. That would be much appreciated. I also draw to members' attention that this component starts at five o'clock. From the way it is written it may appear that divisions 67 and 68 should be completed by six o'clock. That is not the case, so members can go past that time. I am making sure everyone is clear on that.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I refer to "Major Spending Changes" on page 801, particularly the reference to bushfire suppression and fire preparedness. Why is there no money for bushfire suppression in the following four years? Can the minister also explain what fire preparedness encompasses?

Mr W.R. MARMION: Those figures can be added. I will give the member an outline. The government is providing an additional \$32.9 million to the Department of Environment and Conservation over four years to enhance the department's fire capability comprising the recurrent funding on page 801 and extra capital funding of \$6.275 million, included on page 808. This reflects our commitment to implementing the recommendations of the Keely reports on the Margaret River and Perth hills bushfires, and the Ferguson review of DEC's capacity to manage large bushfires. The additional funding will focus on employing up to 28 more specialist fire officers, extending contracts for seasonal fire crews, fire weather forecasting services and a bridge inspection and maintenance program. The additional full-time fire staff and longer contracts for seasonal fire crews will improve DEC's prescribed burning and fire suppression capabilities. As the member will be aware, the opportunities for prescribed burning are limited and the additional staff will enable the department to undertake more burns when the weather conditions are suitable. The bridge inspection and maintenance program is critical to ensuring rapid access when bushfires occur by avoiding long and time-consuming detours for fire crews.

The Bureau of Meteorology will be introducing charges for its weather forecasting services. These services are critical, as the member knows, in determining fire behaviour during prescribed burning activities. Together with the work being done by DEC to improve its risk management and the additional funding in this budget for FESA, the government is confident the community will be better protected than ever before against bushfires. I will let the director general talk about suppression.

Mr K.J. McNamara: The budget for wildfire suppression is already in place. The department has a standing amount of around \$21 million per annum embedded in the budget already. On page 801 under "Major Spending Changes" in the left-hand column there is a figure of \$8 million for the 2011-12 estimated actual. That

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represents supplementary funding because of the heavy bushfire season we have had this year. There is a standing arrangement in place to meet supplementary requirements where the number of bushfires is above average.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: The minister mentioned that there would be funding under bushfire preparedness so that an additional 28 officers will be employed. What is the optimal number of firefighters within the minister's department? He will have noted, for example, an article in today's paper saying that 299 firefighters were appropriate for Western Australia but that DEC is operating with 250 in fact. What will the 28 additional officers take us up to, and why does he think the figure of 299 is not required?

Mr K.J. McNamara: The figures need to be looked at in two parts. The figure referred to in the paper this morning refers to the conservation employee part of our workforce who are the front-line firefighting staff. Our model says there should be about 250 conservation employees in our three south west forest regions. We met that number last summer. When there are major fires 700 or more staff across the whole department are involved in fighting those fires as incident management teams and other support roles as well as the front-line fire staff. The 28 extra FTEs will, largely, go into, if we like, the non-conservation part of the employee department to do better planning, better risk management and better incident control of fires. There is a component, as the minister said, of the extra funding in this budget that will allow the extension of seasonal contracts for the seasonal component of the conservation employees. So there will be a commensurate increase, if you like, in the full-time equivalent component for conservation employees because the number who are employed seasonally will be able to be employed for longer, but there is not a precise figure on that as yet.

[5.10 pm]

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I have to say that I am totally confused. Maybe I can ask that the answer be provided by way of supplementary information. Can the minister list the number of firefighters on an FTE basis who are employed, where they are located and what the basis of the calculation of those numbers is?

Mr W.R. MARMION: The director general will endeavour to give the answer in a more concise way to see whether we can avoid a supplementary —

Ms M.M. QUIRK: It is not about avoiding supplementary information, minister; it is about giving the information we require.

Mr W.R. MARMION: That is what I said; the director general is going to give the member the answer.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I doubt that the director general will have that to hand now.

Mr W.R. MARMION: We will see.

Mr K.J. McNamara: The figure of 250 conservation employees is across the south west forest regions, which largely range from about Lancelin to Denmark and all the country south west of that. At the moment, we have about 210 conservation employees on hand and we enhance that with our seasonal employees during the summer period. As for precise locations and so on, I do not have that to hand.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Minister, what I am asking is: why is it that the minister says that the figure of 299 is inappropriate?

Mr W.R. MARMION: Sorry, where did the member get that? Who said 299 was inappropriate? I do not recall saying that.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: It was three questions ago, minister—just keep up!

Mr W.R. MARMION: Mr Dans might be able to provide further clarification on the question.

Mr P.D. Dans: For the 2011–12 bushfire season, we had 267 conservation employees employed in our three south west forest regions—that is, the Swan, south west and Warren regions. There were in the order of 80 to 90 conservation employees a region, made up of a mix of permanent and seasonal employees. That exceeded our model of 250 conservation employees that we work on now with aerial suppression capability in place. It exceeds what we historically had throughout the south west over the past decade or so. Additional to our conservation employee workforce, we have approximately 66 permanent dedicated fire planners and coordinators spread throughout the state. The 28 additional FTEs will build on that dedicated number of 66 fire planners and coordinators around the state. When the Department of Environment and Conservation responds to a bushfire event, that number of 66 is assisted by, as the director general referred to, up to 700 other employees who have some skills in incident management teams but are not dedicated fire officers. The new funding in the 2012–13 budget is to supplement the dedicated fire officers around the state.

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Ms M.M. QUIRK: I will ask for supplementary information later because the minister did not answer the question that I specifically asked. Will the minister concede, given that he gave evidence that there will be additional funding of more than \$32 million over four years, that his department has been severely under-resourced for some time and that this is a concession that that has in fact been the case?

Mr W.R. MARMION: No, member. The government has addressed the findings of the Keelty report.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: One of which was that the minister's department was under-resourced.

Mr W.R. MARMION: It depends. We actually have the resources in hand to confront a fire, so it depends. Let us say that we are doing controlled burning, for instance; we have the resources to match the controlled burns that we do. However, we have taken advantage of what the Keelty report advised in terms of fire suppression and we are putting some extra effort into increasing FTE numbers.

In terms of the supplementary information, the member wants the number of staff by region who are dedicated and those who are supplementary when —

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Yes, the number of FTEs in each district.

The CHAIRMAN: I ask the minister to clarify what supplementary information he will provide.

Mr W.R. MARMION: For each district in DEC, we can provide those staff who are dedicated solely to fire fighting and conservation.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: And how many additional seasonal workers are allocated to each district.

Mr W.R. MARMION: And how many seasonal staff are added to each district.

[*Supplementary Information No A31.*]

Dr G.G. JACOBS: I would like to talk about an endangered species, the western ground parrot.

The CHAIRMAN: Member for Eyre, I ask you to refer to a page number and a line item.

Dr G.G. JACOBS: Sure, I will get to that. I refer to the "Saving the Western Ground Parrot" line item on page 801, which has an allocation of \$250 000. The minister would know, of course, that essentially the western ground parrot is now really found only east of Albany in my area in Cape Arid National Park, which has the largest population of this endangered species. Can the minister tell me what the allocation of \$250 000 is for? I believe also that there is some activity by the Friends of the Fitzgerald River National Park in supporting measures to preserve the western ground parrot.

Mr W.R. MARMION: I thank the member for the question. I am one of the lucky people who have seen the western ground parrot down the member's way. As the member quite rightly pointed out, it is critically endangered and is now known to be only in Fitzgerald River and Cape Arid National Parks on the south coast.

Mr M.J. COWPER: I have been there a dozen times and I have not seen it.

Dr G.G. JACOBS: It probably saw the member coming!

Mr W.R. MARMION: The only reason I saw it, member, is that it was in captivity.

However, there are fewer than 110 individuals in the wild and a small number in captivity, including the one that I saw. Unfortunately, feral cats are the scourge of the western ground parrot, as well as other native species, and they are notoriously difficult to control because they do not take traditional dried meat bait, as foxes do. The western ground parrot program, member, has involved five years of research using non-toxic baits in Fitzgerald River National Park. In 2010, the Department of Environment and Conservation had enough data to try the real thing—that is, toxic feral cat-specific baits using the naturally occurring poison 1080, with promising results. The plight of the western ground parrot was drawn to the attention of His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh during the royal visit last year. Does the member remember that?

Dr G.G. JACOBS: Yes, I remember that.

Mr W.R. MARMION: His Royal Highness took an active role many years ago in lending his support to save another endangered native bird, as the member will remember, the noisy scrub bird. The government has recognised the need for additional funding and the extra \$250 000 in the 2012–13 budget will enable DEC to continue the feral cat bait trial and management of the captive birds. I must recognise the volunteer work done by the Friends of the Fitzgerald River National Park and also the Friends of the Western Ground Parrot.

Dr G.G. JACOBS: Will the friends be involved in this program?

Mr W.R. MARMION: They are and they will continue to be.

Dr G.G. JACOBS: What do they do?

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The CHAIRMAN: I do not normally give you lots of extra questions. We will come back to the ALP side. Could I get you to follow that one up a bit later?

Dr G.G. JACOBS: Yes. I have a follow-up question: what will the friends be doing in this project?

Mr W.R. MARMION: I will let the director general go into the detail of that.

Mr K.J. McNamara: Just very briefly, the reason people have not seen western ground parrots, even if they have been in that area, is that they are very cryptic; they are very hard to survey and research. An incredible number of hours of volunteer search effort and staff search effort go into locating them, let alone working on them. The volunteers from the friends groups have put an enormous amount of time into that. I am sure that they also assist in the captive breeding colony, which needs a high standard of maintenance.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Thanks very much —

The CHAIRMAN: Can I just clarify, member for Girrawheen, is this your question that you have down on the list or are you asking a question on behalf of someone else?

[5.20 pm]

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I am asking on behalf of —

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I refer to the efficiency dividend line item on page 801 of budget paper No 2. What measures is the minister taking to meet that efficiency dividend, and where are the cuts likely to be in his department?

Mr W.R. MARMION: There will be a two per cent efficiency dividend next year, followed by one per cent and another one per cent and a one per cent. No decisions have been made at this stage, but we will be making sure that no front-line programs and services will be affected.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: I have a further question on the same issue. On pages 801 and 802 of budget paper No 2 we see that by 2015–16 the efficiency dividend will be \$9.2 million. I am concerned that it is unclear which programs are going to be cut. Is the minister not in a position at the moment to tell us which programs will be cut?

Mr W.R. MARMION: Sorry?

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: Is the minister able to tell us which programs will be cut in this \$3.75 million cut?

Mr W.R. MARMION: We will be progressing efficiency measures on a year-by-year basis.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: So some programs will be cut?

Mr W.R. MARMION: I would envisage that efficiency measures will be able to be implemented internally without necessarily affecting any programs.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: So, any program that we see in these budget papers could be cut?

Mr W.R. MARMION: No decisions have been made yet, member; we will be working on that, and by 1 July we will know what the answers are.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: That means that there are some services that the minister is going to quarantine from this kind of cut, I assume, or is the minister saying that, potentially, any of the key services could be cut?

Mr W.R. MARMION: Member, I am making no decisions at all; in fact, we will be looking at the budget of the department and looking at where we can make efficiencies, and we will see what happens when we make those decisions. It is too early to make those decisions. We have not made any decisions.

The CHAIRMAN: Member for Gosnells, can I clarify? You sought a question, you deferred to the member for Girrawheen; do you have a specific question you wish to ask yourself, or do I move on to the next member?

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: You can move on to the next member.

Mr M.J. COWPER: My question refers to the line item “Environmental Regulation” on page 802 of budget paper No 2. I note that in 2012–13 a budget of \$41 319 000 has been allocated for compliance with responsible acts under the ministry. How many compliance officers and support staff are employed by the Department of Environment and Conservation; how many cases of unlawful land clearing have been prosecuted in Western Australia in the past 10 years; how many cases are pending or currently being prosecuted; what number of hectares are involved; what is the value of the penalties imposed to date; is the minister aware of the new Queensland government’s decision to suspend all current prosecutions of landowners in the state, pending investigation by Crown Law in Queensland into the policy of compliance and prosecution in relation to the

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Vegetation Management Act; and, is the minister prepared to take similar action in Western Australia on behalf of private landowners? The minister can reply by way of supplementary information, if he wishes.

Mr F.M. LOGAN: No, answer it now!

Mr W.R. MARMION: I just happen to have that information in my back pocket! We will have to make that a supplementary question.

The CHAIRMAN: Can I clarify the information the minister will be providing?

Mr W.R. MARMION: I would need to read it all out.

Mr M.J. COWPER: I am happy to provide the question.

Mr W.R. MARMION: It would be better if it was put on notice as a question.

Mr M.J. COWPER: By way of supplementary information?

Mr W.R. MARMION: The member can ask a question on notice

Mr M.J. COWPER: I will do that, but just in the short term can the minister tell us how many compliance officers and support staff there are in DEC that it requires \$41 million —

The CHAIRMAN: Member for Murray–Wellington, I am trying to clarify what information is expected, so before we go on to something else, can we just clarify what we —

Mr M.J. COWPER: The minister said to me that he is not going to take it by way of supplementary information, he wants me to put it on notice, which I said I will do.

The CHAIRMAN: That is what is going to occur. Do you have a further question?

Mr M.J. COWPER: The first question I would like the minister to answer is how many compliance officers and support staff are employed by DEC to require a \$41 300 000 allocation for compliance; and, in that case, how many successful prosecutions have there been? Is it worthwhile? I know the minister has an efficiency dividend that he needs to meet, and I would have thought that would be a good place —

Mr W.R. MARMION: That is just one question; I will defer to Mr Atkins to provide an answer, if he can.

Mr R.P. Atkins: The \$41 319 000 is not just for compliance. The majority of that funding is for industry licensing, so it funds the activity of licensing more than 900 industries throughout the state for their emissions and discharges. It supports the whole licensing process. It also supports the pollution response unit and noise regulation support, as well as industry regulation compliance. The compliance component of that is a much smaller proportion of the \$41 million. In terms of the number of compliance officers, we would have to give the member that information on notice.

Mr M.J. COWPER: Is Mr Atkins saying it costs the taxpayers, or the government, money to make industry compliant or be licensed? I thought it would have been the other way around; when I pay my licence it is a cost to me, not to the government.

Mr W.R. MARMION: Mr Atkins?

Mr R.P. Atkins: Approximately \$19 million of licensing revenue supports that function. If the member goes to “Environmental Regulation” on page 806 of budget paper No 2, he will see that the total cost of the service is \$41 319 000, and there is income of \$22 445 000. Just over half of that \$41 million is covered by revenue from industry licence fees and other supplementary income; it is a user-pays service.

Mr M.J. COWPER: It is a user-pays service, is it?

Mr R.P. Atkins: It is. There are components that are not, obviously; the pollution response unit is funded from appropriations. But the industry licensing function and industry licensing compliance function is funded from licence fees.

Mr M.J. COWPER: Does the department have any idea how many successful prosecutions there have been in the past 12 months?

Mr W.R. MARMION: I will pass that over to Mr Atkins.

Mr R.P. Atkins: I cannot tell the member that off the cuff. They do not only cover clearing issues—I understand that is an area of interest to the member; there have been prosecutions on other matters to do with breaches of the Environmental Protection Act.

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Mr W.R. MARMION: I understand they are published every year in the annual report. I refer to Mr Atkins to add some more information.

Mr R.P. Atkins: On the DEC website, under “Environmental Regulation Reporting”, there is a quarterly report that shows the sort of statistics that the member is looking for, but we can certainly provide that through supplementary information.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: The issue of phytophthora is raised on page 802 of budget paper No 2, under “Significant Issues Impacting the Agency”, and I notice that —

The CHAIRMAN: Which dot point is the member on?

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: There is only one dot point on page 802, and it relates to “Significant Issues Impacting the Agency”. We know there is a Dieback Consultative Council, so I assume that is probably one of the key drivers of the agency’s response to this terrible problem. I am keen to know the role the Dieback Consultative Council has played since the government abolished the dieback response group.

[5.30 pm]

Mr W.R. MARMION: Mr Sharp can answer this.

Mr J. Sharp: I am not quite sure of the direction of the question in relation to the functioning of the committee.

Mr W.R. MARMION: Could the member clarify the exact part of the question he wants answered?

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: I can repeat it. I understand we previously had a dieback response group and now that has been replaced by the Dieback Consultative Council, and I wonder what advice it has given to government so far.

Mr J. Sharp: I cannot directly answer the question about what level of advice the council is giving. It exists as a group and I understand that it has not met for some time, but there is a range of inputs into dieback policy and response.

Mr W.R. MARMION: The director general might be able to add some information.

Mr K.J. McNamara: Going back some years, there were several groups providing advice on dieback and that was inefficient. The government has taken the general view on councils and committees and so on of mainstreaming delivery through the role of the department, where it can. Clearly the Conservation Commission, as the statutory vesting body, takes a role and an interest, and addresses dieback in management plans, the coming forest management plan and everything else. We work very closely with the Centre for Phytophthora Science and Management based at Murdoch University. We work extensively with South Coast Natural Resource Management Inc, which also has particular knowledge and expertise in dieback. We have a substantive program in dieback, but we do not work through those previous structures.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: I understand that the Dieback Consultative Council wrote to the minister in September and asked for clarification on how it could do its role, but the minister has not responded to the council as yet. Is that the case?

Mr W.R. MARMION: I am unaware of any outstanding correspondence, so I could take that question on notice. In terms of *Phytophthora cinnamomi*, which is an area in which I have some background because Main Roads took it as a serious issue, we have budgeted for two rangers for the pristine area of Fitzgerald River National Park to add further protection to that area specifically to provide protection against entry and obviously protection from dieback. The member might recall that last year we allocated some funds to that and they will flow through to this year as well.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: How much money from the Department of Environment and Conservation goes towards the operations of the DCC?

Mr W.R. MARMION: The director general.

Mr K.J. McNamara: The department’s direct expenditure on dieback control is about \$2 million a year, but that is not directed through the Dieback Consultative Council; it is directed to on-ground action, associated research and so on. In addition to that \$2 million a year, it is often difficult in nature conservation if, for example, threatened flora is being protected or visitor access to a park is being managed, to decide whether to put that money into managing visitor access, protecting a rare plant or managing the dieback that the plant is being protected from. That \$2 million is direct expenditure on dieback, but there are many other facets of what we do that protect both individual species and areas against the threat of dieback.

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Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: Sticking with the DCC, I understand from DEC's website that membership of the DCC includes groups that I do not think have existed for a long time. The Western Australian Municipal Association and the Department of Conservation and Land Management were mentioned, and even the Water and Rivers Commission is there. How can it be that this body has as its publicly listed member organisations groups that have been disbanded for some time?

Mr W.R. MARMION: If the member likes, we will put anything in relation to the DCC as supplementary information. What specific information would the member like?

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: I would like an explanation about why the public list of member organisations is so hopelessly out of date. As I said, the WA Municipal Association ceased to exist a long time ago. Why would the DCC refer —

Ms M.M. QUIRK: The member wants the current status of that committee.

Mr W.R. MARMION: I will provide supplementary information on the status of the DCC.

[*Supplementary Information No A32.*]

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: I have another question on this dieback issue. Fitzgerald River National Park has had outbreaks of dieback recently and I understand that they have occurred in various places. Perhaps the minister could tell me where he understands they have occurred and I might then have a further question.

Mr W.R. MARMION: That is true; I know that some further outbreaks have been identified and I am aware of them. Perhaps the best person to give more detail would be the director general.

Mr K.J. McNamara: Does the member want a map to show where they are?

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: If I could just be told roughly what part of the park they are in.

Mr W.R. MARMION: They are in Fitzgerald River National Park.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: Are they on management tracks?

Mr W.R. MARMION: Mr Sharp.

Mr J. Sharp: I cannot explain or define the exact sites. There are three sites and they are along management tracks. There is currently an investigation, working with the local community, on what level of knowledge there is about access to those sites. They are not available for public access; however, the public does access those sites, so containment in those areas and further work is being looked at.

Mr W.R. MARMION: I am happy to privately send the member copies of the maps where the dieback outbreaks are in Fitzgerald River National Park if he likes.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: This is my final point on this. If the outbreaks have occurred on management tracks, they are areas that have been accessed by DEC contractors. Is that the case?

Mr W.R. MARMION: That is a specific question and I will ask Mr Sharp to answer.

Mr J. Sharp: The tracks can be accessed with approval by various groups, including those conducting research and those doing management work, but there is also the capacity for illegal entry because of the lack of capacity to manage and provide surveillance on those tracks at all times. Therefore, there are a range of possibilities regarding the cause of the infection.

Dr G.G. JACOBS: I refer to the reference to great western woodlands on page 808 of the *Budget Statements*. As the minister would know, the great western woodlands encompasses almost entirely my electorate of Eyre and I am supportive of a management plan. I draw the minister's attention to the second line item under the heading "Works in Progress". There is an \$800 000 allocation, and \$300 000 has been spent. What was that for? What was achieved with the \$300 000? What will be achieved with the 2012–13 allocation of \$500 000? In addition, where, if there is one, would I find an allocation for any easements proposed in the agricultural component of the state barrier fence on unallocated crown land or reserves?

Mr W.R. MARMION: The government's \$3.8 million funding commitment to the great western woodlands includes, as the member said, the capital component of \$800 000. The final strategy document was released by the then Minister for Environment in November 2010. That commitment was given to engage with a wide variety of stakeholders in the rollout of on-ground works. The DEC has ensured that capital works have been preceded by adequate consultation and proper planning. An amount of \$300 000 has been spent on upgrades to tracks as part of a strategic fire access network. There has been the production of information signs and recreational site works at Credo Station and Peak Charles National Park—an area which I have unfortunately never been able to visit and which I want to visit one day; I have driven past the sign. The \$500 000 allocation in

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2012–13 will achieve completion of recreational site works and the establishment of strategic fire access networks.

In terms of the part of the member's question relating to the easements proposed in the agricultural component for the state barrier fence on UCL or reserves, I can give the member an update on that. In April 2010, the Minister for Agriculture and Food and the then Minister for Environment announced an injection of \$8.82 million in royalties for regions funding for wild dog control, and \$5.17 million of that was for the state barrier fence. The allocation is through the agriculture and food portfolio and the Minister for Agriculture and Food is the appropriate minister to specifically answer the member's question.

[5.40 pm]

Dr G.G. JACOBS: Madam Chair, I have another question, if I may.

The CHAIRMAN: It is not normal for members of the government to seek further questions.

Dr G.G. JACOBS: If I may, Madam Chair, with respect to that \$800 000, the minister has talked about the amount of \$300 000 for the work that is being done in Peak Charles National Park and other areas. There are obviously other sites in the region. I live there, Madam Chair, and I need to know where this work is going on.

Mr W.R. MARMION: Mr Sharp chairs the reference group, so I will ask him whether he can be more specific about where the dollars might be going for recreational facilities in the member's area.

Mr J. Sharp: Some of those will be specific site redevelopments. I do not have the list of those here. A lot of it will relate to providing information, signage and directions through the great western woodlands and the identification of places; some of that will be upgraded. Some of those funds will be expended with local authorities in upgrading sites within the great western woodlands. There is a list of the proposed developments, and I can provide that list to the member if he wishes.

Dr G.G. JACOBS: That would be great.

The CHAIRMAN: The member for Cockburn.

Mr F.M. LOGAN: I will pass over to the member for Girrawheen.

The CHAIRMAN: Can I just clarify, member for Cockburn, that you are not going to ask a question at all now?

Mr F.M. LOGAN: No; I am passing over to the member for Girrawheen.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Minister, I refer to "Major Spending Changes" on page 801 and the items on bushfire preparedness and fire preparedness. In response to my last question, the minister mentioned the Keelty report. I want to ask the minister a few questions about the follow-up from Keelty. As I understand it, a post-incident analysis is currently being done in relation to both the Margaret River and Nannup fires, and the minister's department has sought Noetic Solutions to do that post-incident analysis.

Mr W.R. MARMION: I think the member knows that the Department of the Premier and Cabinet is overseeing that report. Is that the first question?

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Just on that, Noetic is doing the post-incident analysis on behalf of both FESA and the minister's department.

Mr W.R. MARMION: I will let the director general clarify exactly who is doing what.

Mr K.J. McNamara: One of the Keelty outcomes, I think from the first report, related to some degree of independence in doing post-incident analyses, rather than the agency that was responsible for the fire commissioning and owning, if you like, the post-incident analysis. For that reason, the post-incident analyses for both Margaret River and Milyeannup have been commissioned by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, and they are being carried out by Noetic. The reports will be provided through the Department of the Premier and Cabinet to the State Emergency Management Committee for consideration.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: As I understand it, that report is due to be completed by the end of the month.

The CHAIRMAN: Is that a question, member for Girrawheen?

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Yes.

Mr W.R. MARMION: On the first part of the question, I think the member is right, but I will let the director general advise when he thinks that might be, even though it is the Department of the Premier and Cabinet that is running the project.

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Mr K.J. McNamara: That is right; we are not the commissioning agency, but the completion of the reports is, as I understand it, imminent.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: When is it expected that those reports will go to the State Emergency Management Committee, of which I understand Mr McNamara is a member?

Mr K.J. McNamara: I would expect that as soon as the Department of the Premier and Cabinet has received the two reports in a final form that it is satisfied meets the requirements for conducting a post-incident analysis, they will be forwarded forthwith to the chair of the State Emergency Management Committee, the Commissioner of Police, and they will be considered at the SEMC promptly thereafter.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Can the minister clarify that that report is separate from the independent report that Mr Keelty has also recommended?

Mr K.J. McNamara: Mr Keelty was obviously commissioned by the government to conduct a special inquiry, shortly after the Margaret River fire. The two reports that have been done by Noetic are the post-incident analyses for each of the Margaret River and Milyeannup fires, which occurred simultaneously in November last year. I am not aware of any other reports.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Is the minister aware that in the Keelty report—maybe I should start again. Has the minister read the Keelty report on Margaret River?

Mr W.R. MARMION: Of course I have—many times.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: The minister would be aware, then, that that report recommends an independent review of the post-incident analyses of both FESA and DEC, which is separate from the post-incident analysis, minister.

Mr W.R. MARMION: I do not know that it recommends another report.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: No. It recommends a review of the post-incident analysis. I think Mr Dans might be able to assist here.

Mr W.R. MARMION: Yes. Mr Dans.

Mr P.D. Dans: Mr Keelty's report suggested that the response to the Margaret River bushfire be the subject of an independent report. That is the PIA that is being undertaken now, overseen by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. A separate post-incident analysis is being undertaken for the Milyeannup or Nannup fire by the same consultant, Noetic Solutions.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: So will those reports be tabled? Will the minister be tabling the report in relation to DEC?

Mr W.R. MARMION: It is not my decision to make. The reports are owned by the Premier, and the Department of the Premier and Cabinet commissioned the reports, so it will be up to the Premier to decide. The Minister for Emergency Services may be involved as well.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Normally a post-incident analysis occurs within a matter of weeks after an incident. The residents of Nannup and Margaret River have waited many months, and they may well not at the end of that time be able to see what is in those reports.

Mr W.R. MARMION: As I said, member, that is not my decision to make. It is up to the Premier.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: My final question on this issue —

The CHAIRMAN: Member, is this a different question from what the member has been asking, because I think the answer has been given?

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Yes. Can the minister confirm that the director general is on the relevant DPC committee that is dealing with the follow-up of the Keelty recommendations? If so, is it not the case that the director general should be aware of the status of those reports and what is intended to be done with them?

Mr K.J. McNamara: As I have already indicated, my understanding is that the completion of the two Noetic reports is imminent. They will then be accepted in their final form by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, which will forward them to the State Emergency Management Committee via, I expect, the Commissioner of Police in his capacity as chair of that committee. After the SEMC has received those reports, they will be considered and there will be advice back to the government. The SEMC reports to the Minister for Emergency Services. I would have every expectation that the reports would be made public after they have been through the SEMC process and advice has been provided to the government.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: It is good to see that coordination between agencies has very much improved.

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Ms J.M. FREEMAN: I refer to page 806 and key efficiency indicator 4, environmental regulation. The second sentence under that heading states —

Regulate the investigation, classifications and management of contaminated sites.

The minister would know that I have a great interest in Mirrabooka groundwater contamination from the Atlas site. The minister would know also that the Department of Environment and Conservation has issued an investigation notice. Have groundwater monitoring bores been installed at all of the sites, as required by the investigation notice, and is the department aware what monitoring results have been observed and recorded? I understand that the local residents were doorknocked, and that was also a requirement of the investigation notice. How many local residents were doorknocked as required, how many engaged in discussions, and how many were left with an advisory pamphlet; and can the minister table that pamphlet if it is available?

[5.50 pm]

The CHAIRMAN: I think the member has a few too many questions. It is very difficult for anyone to remember what the first question was.

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: It is all right; the minister knows all about the issue.

The CHAIRMAN: Let us keep it to a sensible number.

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: I have been told. I will have a few more questions following on from that.

Mr W.R. MARMION: I am keen to resolve this issue, as the member knows, and to make sure that Atlas meets its responsibilities. Mr Atkins will probably be able to provide the member with a more recent update than the one the member got about a month ago.

Mr R.P. Atkins: The monitoring bores have not been installed yet but they are about to be installed. Because it is a residential area, the monitoring bores need to go into public spaces, mainly in road reserves and such. Atlas had some difficulty getting permission from Main Roads and the City of Stirling to install the monitoring bores. That took some time to resolve but it has now been resolved and permission has been given. The department is reviewing the revised sampling and analysis plan submitted by Atlas in recent weeks, which will have a revised timetable for the installation and monitoring to take place. Because we have not completed reviewing Atlas's amended sampling and analysis program, I do not have those details to hand for the member tonight.

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: Can that information be tabled for me? Can it be taken on notice and tabled?

Mr W.R. MARMION: Can the member clarify exactly what information it is?

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: I want to know where those bores are going and how many local residents —

Mr W.R. MARMION: Can we do it one at a time? Does the member want a map showing where the bores are?

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Is the member asking for supplementary information?

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: That is different from tabling information. The minister will now seek to clarify what information he is providing.

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: Where are the bores going?

Mr W.R. MARMION: Let us go slowly.

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: How many local residents were doorknocked, as required under the investigation notice? That will do at this point in time.

Mr W.R. MARMION: I am happy to provide a supplementary answer about where the bores are going—that is the first part of the question—and how many local residents have been doorknocked as part of the process of putting in the bores.

[*Supplementary Information No A33.*]

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: The Department of Environment and Conservation concluded that there was prima facie evidence—in the minister's letter to me on 3 May 2012—for three breaches of the investigation notice that DEC issued. Is DEC satisfied that there have been no further breaches of any provisions of the investigation notice since it was issued?

Mr W.R. MARMION: I will ask Mr Atkins to provide an answer.

Mr R.P. Atkins: The fact that the bores could not be put in on time was a technical breach but that was beyond Atlas's control. We are dealing with that as an administrative breach of the notice. Essentially, a letter of

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warning is the appropriate action for that. We also took steps to assist with getting approval from Main Roads and the City of Stirling for Atlas's consultants to put the bores in place.

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: I have one final question. The minister would be aware of Mr Barnett of Balikpapan Avenue in Dianella. He still has a memorial on the certificate of title for his property and his groundwater bore has been decommissioned. When in this process will Mr Barnett have the memorial removed or the issue resolved? Given that other research has been done, why have no other properties been subject to memorials, considering the extent of the known and likely extent of the groundwater contamination from the Atlas Group site?

Mr R.P. Atkins: The matter will be resolved when the sampling analysis plan has been completed and we understand what the extent of the contamination is and what the remediation strategy is, and when we also get a better characterisation of the risk to human health through exposure.

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: What is the time frame for that?

The CHAIRMAN: Member for Nollamara, the question is being answered. Give the gentleman a chance to answer it.

Mr R.P. Atkins: That information will be contained in the revised sampling and analysis plan. We will provide that to the member when we provide her with a map of the bores, because it is in that document.

In terms of the memorial on Mr Barnett's property, under the Contaminated Sites Act, Mr Barnett formally notified the department that his property had contaminated groundwater. Because it was a formal notification, the act does not have any discretion in terms of the steps to go through and within 45 days the site has to be classified. His is the only property that has been formally referred. None of the other properties have. From Mr Barnett's point of view it would have been better if it had not been referred but because it had, it had to go through that process. We have assisted Mr Barnett as much as we can to moderate the terms of the classification and the wording of the memorial on his title. I know that he still is not satisfied but we have gone as far as we can within the constraints of the legislation.

Mr I.C. BLAYNEY: I refer to the second last dot point under "Outcomes and Key Effectiveness Indicators" on page 804 and the percentage of waste in the metropolitan area diverted from landfill through recycling. In 2011–12 the target was 45 per cent but the outcome is forecast to be only 35 per cent. Can the minister explain this?

Mr W.R. MARMION: I thank the member for the question. At the outset I remind him that the reporting period uses data collected voluntarily from industry for the previous financial year. The total waste generated decreased by approximately 16 per cent, or 0.9 million tonnes during the 2011–12 reporting period compared with the 2010–11 reporting period. The amount of waste diverted from landfill also decreased by 0.7 million tonnes from 2.4 million tonnes to 1.7 million tonnes. The largest reduction was in construction and demolition waste, which is basically concrete, bricks and sand, followed by paper and cardboard. Municipal waste, which is essentially household waste, has been pretty much constant. However, commercial and industrial construction and demolition waste both declined, largely as a result of the downturn in economic conditions. Construction and demolition waste is highly variable, depending on the number and nature of construction projects happening at the time. The construction and demolition site also faces stiff competition from landfills, which despite the increase in the waste levy in 2010 remains cheaper than recycling. Recycling commercial waste, principally cardboard, depends on overseas and interstate markets as unfortunately there is no cardboard recycling facility in Western Australia. International market demand for paper and cardboard has declined in line with economic conditions, so when the prices for recycled materials fall it is often cheaper to send waste to landfill rather than recycle it as the transport costs can be higher than the value of the material.

Notwithstanding that, the government remains committed to recycling and re-use. In line with the objectives outlined in the "Waste Strategy for Western Australia", which I released in March this year, we are aiming to increase the amount of C and D waste being recycled from its current low level of only 34 per cent to 75 per cent by 2020.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: I turn to the Kimberley science and conservation strategy on pages 808 and 810. I know that it is a passion of the minister's. It was previously mentioned that the value of the program was \$63 million over five years, yet turning to the budget papers there is no way that the different references add up to \$63 million. That might be because some of the money is going elsewhere. I have two questions for the minister. Firstly, can he confirm that it is still \$63 million over five years; and, secondly, can he say how much of the money for the Kimberley science and conservation strategy is for DEC to spend?

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Mr W.R. MARMION: I thank the member for the question. Yes, the total amount committed last year across all agencies is \$63 million. Funding for the program over five years for DEC accounts for \$39.68 million of the \$63 million. That was in last year's budget.

The CHAIRMAN: I am conscious of the time. The member may want to wait before asking the second part of his question so that the minister can answer it because I will suspend the committee at 6.00 pm. Does the minister have something he would like to add to the first part of the answer?

Mr W.R. MARMION: I would like to add that we are progressing very well in terms of creating marine parks in the Kimberley. As the member knows, Camden Sound marine park has a sanctuary zone and has gone down quite well.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you, minister; that was very eloquent.

Meeting suspended from 6.00 to 7.00 pm

The CHAIRMAN: Before we start, how long do members want to continue with the environment division?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Mr Chairman, the opposition proposes that we not deal tonight with the Zoological Parks Authority and the Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority.

The CHAIRMAN: The opposition does not want to deal with those two?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: The opposition would prefer to spend more time on the Environment and Conservation division and on the Water division.

The CHAIRMAN: We have some advisers from those two authorities.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: We need to ask whether government members want to ask questions.

The CHAIRMAN: Do government members want to ask any questions of those two authorities?

Dr G.G. JACOBS: I have questions for the Swan River Trust and the botanic gardens, and also I would like to ask a question of the Office of the Environmental Protection Authority.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: It is only the Zoo and the botanic gardens. We wish to deal with the Swan River Trust and with the office of the EPA.

The CHAIRMAN: So there are two that the opposition does not want to deal with—the Zoological Parks Authority and the Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority. Does the member for Eyre wish to ask questions on those two or put the question on notice?

Dr G.G. JACOBS: I have one question on the Zoo and one on the botanic gardens.

The CHAIRMAN: So the member for Eyre wants them to hang around.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Mr Chairman, I would therefore propose that we deal with the Department of Environment and Conservation, concluding at 7.45 pm and use the 15 minutes before eight o'clock to deal with the botanic gardens and the zoological gardens.

The CHAIRMAN: Okay; that is fair enough. The member for Gosnells was in the middle of a question.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: I just heard from the minister that \$39 million from the Kimberley science and conservation strategy is to go to DEC—only \$39 million from the total of \$63 million. My question now is: what sums will go to other agencies, what are those agencies and how much is each of those agencies receiving?

Mr W.R. MARMION: I will defer to the director general for the detailed answer to where the breakdown of the money is going.

Mr K.J. McNamara: The difference between the \$39 million allocation to DEC and the \$63 million total is across a number of agencies. It includes in particular an allocation of \$12 million to the Western Australian Marine Science Institution for research related to, obviously, the marine environment and particularly the marine parks theme of the strategy; allocations for Tourism WA; allocations for the native title work that has to be done; some allocations into the Department of Mines and Petroleum for some geological survey work; and I recall a science portal allocation for the Department of Commerce. All those details were in last year's budget across the different agencies.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: Is the minister able to provide me with the amounts going to the Department of Mines and Petroleum and Tourism WA?

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Mr W.R. MARMION: These were all in our budget last year, but the director general might be able to recall some of those dollars.

Mr K.J. McNamara: Beyond the ones that I have already mentioned, in particular the WAMSI one, we do not have those details with us this year. The allocations across the other agencies would have to be provided via supplementary information.

The CHAIRMAN: Is the minister going to provide some supplementary information?

Mr W.R. MARMION: Yes, I am happy to provide supplementary information on the breakdown, I presume, of the \$63 million and how it was allocated last year.

[*Supplementary Information No A34.*]

Dr G.G. JACOBS: I refer to the line item “Drawdowns from Royalties for Regions Fund” in the table at the bottom of page 808 headed “Funded By”. It lists \$8.845 million for the asset and investment program. Can the minister itemise that and explain what this money has been used for?

Mr W.R. MARMION: I will not go through this in too much detail, but in 2010 the government announced that \$20 million from the royalties for regions would be allocated to increase regional tourism through a range of projects in Western Australia, particularly in the most popular parks. There were four programs and 16 projects. There was a program for expanding Naturebank, for example. Francois Peron National Park, Cape Le Grand National Park and Whicher National Park were involved. I am trying to look for one in the member for Eyre’s electorate.

Dr G.G. JACOBS: Cape Le Grand.

Mr W.R. MARMION: Yes; so there you go. Also, there were some sites under the low-cost camping program. I am looking again to see whether there is one in the member for Eyre’s area. There is one at Kurrajong. Nanga Mill campground is an example that targets low-cost camping and caravanning. The third program was sites under a roading program. The Loop and Z Bend at Kalbarri, for example, are in a very popular area. The fourth program was to do with park visitor infrastructure. Again, there is the Kalbarri National Park, the coastal sites at the loop road and Torndirrup National Park at the Gap. Basically the funds are spread out over those four programs.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: Turning to waste matters, I am curious to know whether the landfill levy is being applied differently to putrescible waste versus to construction and demolition waste; and, if so, why? My understanding is that the C&D waste is being looked at through a cubic metreage-type arrangement, whereas the other is through a tonnage arrangement.

Mr W.R. MARMION: I will defer to Mr Atkins to give a detailed answer on this one.

Mr R.P. Atkins: Yes; the putrescible rate is per tonne and the inert rate is per cubic metre. It is done differently because, obviously, the characteristics of inert waste are much more variable than putrescible waste because concrete is very heavy. But other components of inert waste are a lot lighter, so it is done on a cubic-metre basis to even out those lightweight versus heavyweight items; whereas putrescible is obviously more homogenous in terms of weight.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: Has the government considered moving to the one form of measurement for both waste streams?

Mr W.R. MARMION: I will defer to Mr Atkins again.

Mr R.P. Atkins: The Waste Authority proposes to do a review of the levy and the way the levy is structured, and we will provide advice to the minister on that at some time in the future.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: The officer said the Waste Authority is going to do a review. Has it not publicly released that or is it about to undertake that review?

[7.10 pm]

Mr W.R. MARMION: I will ask Mr Atkins to answer this.

Mr R.P. Atkins: This is mentioned in the waste strategy that has been released. It is one of the components of the waste strategy. I cannot quote what page it is on, although I could six months ago. It refers to a review of the landfill levy.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: Does that same review refer to changes in the actual rates?

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Mr R.P. Atkins: It can do; it is quite likely that it will. It will be looking at the whole economic model for the landfill levy, comparing putrescible waste to inert and looking at, if we like, the volume versus weight approach to it. We will do an economic analysis. The details of that scheme will be put forward as part of the business plan for the minister's approval so that the expenditure can be allocated.

Mr W.R. MARMION: There is no plan at this stage in this budget to make any changes in the ensuing 12 months.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: I am curious to know the gap between the actual landfill levy and the landfill externalities—the environmental cost of things going to landfill. Has that been looked at in this review?

Mr W.R. MARMION: Maybe Mr Atkins can give a bit of a ballpark figure, but I think the member is asking a fairly general question.

Mr R.P. Atkins: The short answer to the question is no. That sort of analysis has not been done in terms of looking at the full externalities of the environmental cost of land filling and comparing that to the levy. The levy is an economic instrument to drive change and diversion of waste from landfill and to encourage recycling. It is the balance of the cost of landfill versus the cost of recycling. It does not take into account the externalities of environmental cost.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: I am curious to know the effect of carbon pricing on our landfill and the various levies.

Mr W.R. MARMION: When the carbon tax comes into play, we will take into account what impact it will have on our bottom line moving forward.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: We know that the carbon tax, the initial phase of carbon pricing, will be \$23 a tonne, so the modelling has been done already I would have thought.

Mr K.J. McNamara: We understand it will affect only new landfill, so it will be phased in as new sites come in. Mr Atkins can clarify that.

Mr R.P. Atkins: The impact of the carbon price is a matter for the landfill operators to work out. The WA Local Government Association is looking at those impacts now. In fact, I asked a question earlier today to see whether that was happening, and it is, so it is a matter for local government and any of the landfill operators, because a large number of landfills are operated by private enterprise. This is an issue that is being looked at by landfill operators, particularly local government, across the country. There was a news item a few nights ago about what Wagga Wagga in New South Wales had estimated the cost at. The calculation is not straightforward and the landfill operators are wrestling with the costing model. The review I mentioned in the previous answer in terms of any recommendations about changes to the landfill levy will take into account the impact of the carbon price. Of course, as the carbon price comes in on 1 July—this review will not be done before then, quite clearly—by the time the review gets to look at this, there should be some experience on the ground in terms of how landfill operators are handling it.

Mr W.R. MARMION: My understanding is that the commonwealth is still working on the detail of how it will work. When we met the federal Minister for Climate Change and Energy Efficiency, only about four weeks ago I think, he was still putting the final touches on how it may work. They may have it now.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I refer to the last dot point on page 803, which relates to the department's development of environmental offset policy guidelines and systems to promote transparency and accountability. I would like to know whether the guidelines have been finalised and made public. If not, why not? When will the guidelines be available? Has the environmental offset register been finalised and made public?

Mr W.R. MARMION: This is an important initiative of our government. I released the WA government environmental offset policy on 27 September 2011. The policy provides a framework to improve consistency, transparency and accountability offsets arising from the environmental approvals process. The policy commits to the preparation of guidelines to support interpretation of the policy and the development of a public register, as the member mentioned, to provide a centralised record of offset arrangements. I can report that the guidelines are in an advanced draft stage and should be finalised in 2012–13. The register is in development and is expected to be substantially completed this coming financial year, 2012–13.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Is it due out next year?

Mr W.R. MARMION: Correct.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: What has been the cost of the development of the policy and the register to date?

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Mr W.R. MARMION: It has all been done in-house, so the development process has involved the time of Department of Environment and Conservation in-house staff and officers; some other agencies are also involved. The specific cost would be only an estimate of salary costs.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Is it being developed in-house?

Mr W.R. MARMION: No consultants are involved. DEC is driving it in conjunction with other agencies.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: In his answer to a question on notice on 24 May this year, the minister mentioned the interagency group or task force. Which agencies are represented on the interagency working group?

Mr W.R. MARMION: In case I miss out a couple, I will ask the director general to list the agencies.

Mr K.J. McNamara: Under the government's commitment to approvals reform, a ministerial task force, chaired by the Premier, oversees a range of reform projects, and there is a directors general working group chaired by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. The agencies on the working group that developed the offsets policy released last year and that continue to work on the guidelines and the register include the Department of Environment and Conservation, the office of the EPA, the Department of Mines and Petroleum, the Department of Planning, the Department of State Development and the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. There may be one or two others involved but certainly all those agencies are involved. There was also consultation with peak groups in industry and the conservation movement. That will also be the case as the guidelines are further developed.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: The eighth dot point on page 803 refers to a community focus on ambient air quality monitoring and management in the Perth metropolitan area. It also refers to management strategies being put in place in Collie, Kalgoorlie and the Burrup Peninsula. My question is more in relation to metropolitan initiatives in air monitoring and a focus on air quality. I listened with interest earlier in the year to the discussions about the Cockburn Cement issues at Munster. Some similar issues may be emerging in my electorate. Can the minister please update us on what action the government will take with regard to the Cockburn Cement operations?

[7.20 pm]

Mr W.R. MARMION: I thank the member for the question. I know the member for Cockburn is probably interested in this one as well. In March this year, the government tabled its response to the Legislative Council's Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs inquiry into Cockburn Cement Ltd. The government basically accepted the inquiry's recommendations. On 2 April this year, the Department of Environment and Conservation issued a new licence for Cockburn Cement's operations at Munster following consultation with the community and the company. The new licence requires the company to install a baghouse filter on kiln 5, similar to the one recently installed and operating very successfully on kiln 6. The licence sets fail limits and targets for kiln 6 and kiln 5 once the baghouse is installed. The filter on kiln 6 is operating and performing well and reducing dust levels to below 30 milligrams per cubic metre in line with the conditions. A new requirement to operate all kilns to below target levels has been included to minimise emissions from the facility and, in particular, kiln 5 pending completion of the baghouse filter on that kiln. It also requires an independent report on odour monitoring, which is to be conducted in the community and must be completed by 1 July this year. The company will also have to improve management and monitoring of the coal stockpile to reduce odours and emissions from that area. An overall 14 conditions in the new licence are more restrictive than in the previous licence. Other conditions include the management of odour emissions, the tightening of reporting periods, a limit on sulphur dioxide emissions and reporting and compliance with that limit. I am pretty pleased at the moment with the way that Cockburn Cement is performing and, after years of community complaints, I am hoping this whole saga can be put to bed.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: I will return to the issue of marine parks. I note that the 2011–12 budget papers stated that planning for new marine parks in the north —

Mr W.R. MARMION: Can the member point out what page, line and item number he is referring to?

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: Yes, of course. I refer to the first dot point on page 803, and also the second dot point, where mention is made of marine parks. The previous budget papers said that planning for new marine parks in the north Kimberley and Roebuck Bay would be a priority, but the 2012–13 *Budget Statements* do not contain any reference to new marine parks. How is the Kimberley science and conservation strategy progressing the advancement of those parks? Can the minister indicate the cost involved in the preparation of those marine parks?

Mr W.R. MARMION: I think the member is after an update on all the Kimberley marine parks. Is that what the member is after?

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Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: With the cost involved in producing those—in terms of the FTEs involved, and the other work that is involved in creating them.

Mr W.R. MARMION: I will introduce the topic because I was a bit confused by the question; however, I can tell the member where we are at with marine parks. As I have mentioned in a previous answer, the Camden Sound marine park—the first cab off the rank of the four Kimberley marine parks—should be gazetted by the end of June; so it will be in existence then. The indicative management plan for the Eighty Mile Beach marine park was released with a three-month public consultation period, which closed earlier this year, and the final management plan is being prepared. Hopefully, we can get some resolution on that one this year. Planning for the Roebuck Bay marine park has also progressed significantly with a fair bit of work being undertaken with the Yawuru traditional owners under a formal agreement. Hopefully, an indicative management plan for that marine park will be released later this year. We are doing some preliminary work on the fourth new Kimberley marine park, which is in the north Kimberley. Is the member after what costs have been incurred in preparing those?

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: In the second dot point on page 803, mention is made of the south west capes area between Busselton and Augusta, and the Dampier Archipelago marine park creation. Can the minister tell us how much that is costing?

Mr K.J. McNamara: Last year's budget included specific allocations within the Kimberley strategy for the marine parks of the Kimberley, in particular Camden Sound and Eighty Mile Beach, as the minister has indicated, and also for the Yawuru area, which is Roebuck Bay. The budget last year also included specific allocations for the capes marine park in the south west and for the Dampier Archipelago. The capes marine park, for example, included a commitment of \$5.3 million over four years to DEC for the establishment and management of that marine park, which the Premier and the minister announced at Yallingup a few months ago and which will also be in place by the middle of this year. I do not have figures separated for the planning and liaison aspects. Once again, that is a matter that is absorbed within the normal work of a combination of staff in our marine branch, senior staff such as the deputy director general of parks and conservation, and also district and regional staff. It is not accounted for separately; it is really just officer time.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: It mentions the establishment and initial setting up costs. I would also be interested to know the FTE time put into compliance monitoring. I expect that we might need some supplementary information to detail the time put into the creation of marine parks, and also to know how much effort is put into compliance.

Mr W.R. MARMION: I need some clarification on this, Mr Chairman. The parks have not been established; so no compliance costs have been incurred to date. Can the member be more specific?

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: In the forward years we will need to have some compliance work done, or what is the point in having a marine park?

Mr W.R. MARMION: The member is asking what funds are in the forward estimates in terms of the parameters for specific areas and requirements for different zones within the marine park. The director general will be able to answer that.

Mr K.J. McNamara: I can give a preliminary answer, but we will have to provide the rest as supplementary information. In the case of the capes marine park, for example, I said that \$5.3 million has been allocated to DEC over the four years, and also \$3.26 million has been allocated to the Department of Fisheries. When we do a marine park budget, we allocate it across several categories including compliance, research and monitoring, education and interpretation, and some other elements as well. I do not have the breakdown of those figures, but the government is committing funding for when the parks are created, and the component of that total funding for compliance will have to be provided as supplementary information.

[Supplementary Information No A35.]

Mr M.J. COWPER: When the cape to cape national park was announced, there was an advertisement in the paper that showed an indicative map of a shaded area. Many of my constituents were very angry, thinking that that was a no-go zone for fishing; in fact, it was only a small area. Are there any plans to make that more clear?

Mr W.R. MARMION: I think there was an error in that particular advertisement in that it did not show the breakup; it just showed the whole area. I think they might have put out another one, but maybe Mr Sharp might be able to give a —

Mr M.J. COWPER: Some people think there is no fishing in that area.

Mr J. Sharp: A map is available on the website that indicates the areas and the zoning that will be included in that park, and that makes it very clear what areas are available for different uses and purposes.

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Mr M.J. COWPER: Is there any chance of having that readvertised? When it first hit the papers on the Saturday people were very angry and ringing my office the following day.

Mr W.R. MARMION: My understanding is that that advertisement was organised by another section of government, but we will have a chat with that section and see if we are required to do that. From memory, 93 per cent of the marine park can still be fished.

[7.30 pm]

Mr M.J. COWPER: I think we need to advertise or market that better.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I refer to the first dot point at the bottom of page 802 and the fourth dot point on page 803, related to parks. I ask my perennial question: what progress has the department made with regard to the Peel regional park; are any officers currently working on plans to establish and gazette the Peel regional park; and, if not, why not? Is there any money specifically highlighted or appearing in the budget for such a purpose? I will have a few other questions depending upon the answers.

Mr W.R. MARMION: I thought I might get this question, member. The initial part of this is done by the Department of Planning, but Mr Sharp will provide an update on where we are at in that area of the member's electorate.

Mr J. Sharp: The process of establishing regional parks is done through the planning portfolio, putting together an overall plan for a regional park including the various tenures, of which the Department of Environment and Conservation may only have part of the tenure. That plan is then put together and finalised for the whole of government. The question about where that plan is in terms of its proposed establishment rests with the planning portfolio. There have been various iterations of plans around that for 15 years.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Is the minister aware of the latest report from the Peel–Harvey Catchment Council with regard to the health and wellbeing of the Peel–Harvey system, and research showing that over the past five years there has been further deterioration in a number of key indicators? With that knowledge, is there any additional funding in this budget for the Peel–Harvey Catchment Council; if so, how much and over what period?

Mr W.R. MARMION: I am aware of the report about the health of the Peel–Harvey estuary. It is obviously of concern. The Department of Water also comes under this area. There has been natural resource management funding under the Department of Agriculture and Food. There is nothing in the Department of Environment and Conservation's budget for the Peel–Harvey.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Can the minister indicate how many DEC staff are currently based in the Peel region and what services they deliver? I am happy to receive that as supplementary information, if necessary.

Mr W.R. MARMION: I will defer to Mr Dans, who might be able to provide that information now.

Mr P.D. Dans: The department has an office on Pinjarra Road, Mandurah. An annual average of 8.4 full-time equivalents are based out of that office, servicing the Yalgorup National Park and the rest of the Peel area. They are assisted by officers based in Rockingham and overseen from our coastal district office in Wanneroo, which has an all-up workforce in the order of 80.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I refer to "Environmental Regulation" on page 806. Have any officers inspected the condition of the Point Peron pipeline running from Woodman Point waste water treatment plant through Rockingham? If so, how regular are those inspections carried out by department staff, when was the last inspection, and has an assessment been done by the department of the potential hazards presented by this pipeline failing?

Mr W.R. MARMION: I have not visited it myself. Mr Atkins might be able to provide information on that question.

Mr R.P. Atkins: The department has a compliance inspection program for the whole state, based on regions and on risk. There is a frequency of inspections of all premises depending on whether they are low, medium or high-risk premises. In terms of the Cape Peron pipeline, I do not have information at my fingertips, obviously, about when that was last inspected and the results of that inspection. We can take that as supplementary information.

The Water Corporation has a monitoring program that is covered in part by its licence under environmental regulation and in part under ministerial conditions under the ministerial statement issued under part IV of the Environmental Protection Act. So, there is reporting back to the Office of the Environmental Protection Authority and to the Department of Environment and Conservation. In addition to any physical inspections, regular water quality reports and discharge quality reports are provided to the department.

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Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: In terms of the questions that cannot be answered tonight, could they be answered by way of supplementary information?

The CHAIRMAN: Does the minister understand what needs to be provided?

Mr W.R. MARMION: Maybe the member can be clear what the question is, for *Hansard*.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: The minister needs to tell us when the last inspection by department staff was carried out and how regular they have been?

Mr W.R. MARMION: And the outcome?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Yes; and how regular those have been. Did Mr Atkins mention they were yearly?

Mr R.P. Atkins: No; I did not give a frequency.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: We need an answer regarding the regularity of inspections, when the last one was, and has an assessment been done by DEC of the potential hazards?

Mr W.R. MARMION: I will paraphrase that, Mr Chairman. We can provide information on the regularity of the inspections by DEC, when the last one was, and the findings.

[*Supplementary Information No A36.*]

Mr M.J. COWPER: I refer to the line item “Park visitation (annual number of visits)” on page 804. The minister and the department should be commended for the fantastic work being done for ordinary Western Australians who cannot afford to travel overseas and choose to holiday in wonderful locations such as Cape Le Grand, Lucky Bay, Peaceful Bay, Wedge Island, Broke Inlet, Donnelly River, Nanga Mill in my electorate, and Whittakers Mill. The minister has anticipated an increase—can he tell us about some of the modelling around that?

Mr W.R. MARMION: We are doing quite well, so it is a good and timely question. To provide some background: in 1994–95 there were six million visitations. In 2010–11 there were nearly 16 million. We have gone up 10 million visitations in that short period. Of course that is in the context of the Australian–US dollar situation being very high and the attractiveness of some of the South-East Asian places where tourists like to go. The Department of Environment and Conservation’s estimation of park visitation is a projection based on trend data from previous years. Although there is some evidence that the strong Australian dollar has resulted in increased overseas travel at the expense of intrastate destinations, this appears to be offset at a more local level. People who are after a big holiday may prefer to go overseas rather than more expensive destinations within our state. This may be responsible for the decreased visitation numbers in the north, such as in the Kimberley. Despite this, the state of the economy appears to have encouraged more Western Australians to take advantage of natural experiences on DEC-managed areas that are closer to their doorstep. Visitation around popular sites, particularly in the member for Murray–Wellington’s electorate, have increased and more than made up for the decline in remote regions. This change in distribution is particularly evident in DEC’s Blackwood district, which experienced more than an 18 per cent visitation increase from 2010–11 and is showing continued growth to date of approximately five per cent on top of that, year by year. Interestingly, similar trends are being noticed in other states in relation to recreational visitation in local areas—more day trips. Visitation rates are going up across Australia. It is a good-news story.

[7.40 pm]

Mr M.J. COWPER: Given that we have less increased numbers, is there any plan to perhaps inject some funds to look at issues such as ablutions and toilets? The wonderful people at Logue Brook, the Friends of Logue Brook Dam, have written to the minister, and sought some additional capital for the increased numbers of people visiting, by way of an example. There is also a caravan park on Heron Point on the Peel estuary, but there is no water supply or toilets. It is probably DEC land and there is a caravan park there but no real management of it. I think areas like that, which are very popular, could do with some extra funding.

Mr W.R. MARMION: We would be committed to putting facilities and upgrading roads at all our parks. There is quite a big demand in terms of what we are doing at Logue Brook. Perhaps Mr Sharp might be able to say where it fits on our program.

Mr J. Sharp: In relation to the capital expenditure program on facilities across the state, there is a statewide program for both facilities and roads. The understanding that local groups want to recreate locally is driving some of the priorities for expenditure. We are also responding, as an agency, to the parliamentary committee that looked at caravans and camping, and so some priority is being put into investing funds to meet that need. In particular, as was mentioned earlier, a royalties for regions allocation of \$20 million over four years has been injected into meeting those requirements in local areas. As far as Logue Brook is concerned, I think some

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expenditure is being undertaken there in relation to the outcome of the parliamentary committee on water, and it is being upgraded. I cannot say exactly what the spend will be this year, but there is a priority on some planning work around that being done at the moment.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: I refer to the heading “Coordinate the response to climate change” on page 807. I recall that on 1 June last year the minister said that the department was in the process of finalising its climate change adaptation mitigation strategy that would inform funding strategies for the out years. I would like to know what has gone wrong, because we still do not have the climate change adaptation mitigation strategy. I would also like to know why we need 20 full-time equivalents administering the low emissions energy development fund. Is it possible that some of them are still working on the strategy?

Mr W.R. MARMION: The climate change program is obviously a mitigation and adaptation strategy we have been working on. It has been a moving feast because of what the commonwealth has been doing.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: The minister promised this last year, though. If the minister is talking about the program being an adaptation and mitigation strategy —

The CHAIRMAN: Member for Gosnells, let the minister finish, then you can have another question.

Mr W.R. MARMION: I have forgotten what I was saying.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: The minister was blaming the commonwealth.

Mr W.R. MARMION: I acknowledge that we have been working on the climate change mitigation and adaptation strategy for some time, but it has to fit in with what the commonwealth is doing, because that is the big picture. Now the commonwealth has worked out that a carbon tax is coming in, it appears that the commonwealth will be looking after the mitigation side and we will be addressing more the adaptation side. We are refocusing our strategy and rewriting it to focus on the adaptation side, and that should be available shortly to look at. Regarding the actual break-up of the FTEs and which people are in the section working on policy provision to not only the state government, but also the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, and which staff are on the LEED funding program—I do not believe there are 12 people on that program; it is a lot less than that—I will ask the director general to provide those figures.

The CHAIRMAN: It is 7.45 pm and we —

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I have one question I want to ask.

The CHAIRMAN: The member for Mandurah has one question.

Mr W.R. MARMION: I had actually referred the director general to answer a question.

Mr K.J. McNamara: I will be brief. In reference to the FTEs allocated to the LEED fund, there is one FTE allocated to administration and support of the LEED fund.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: I have a further question just to finish up on. The minister has indicated that the climate change strategy would be about adaptation. Will the state government be accessing the \$900 million-plus that the federal government is providing from the carbon pricing scheme towards biodiversity protection?

Mr W.R. MARMION: Director general.

Mr K.J. McNamara: The department, like many other groups and agencies around Western Australia, put in bids for the first round of the biodiversity fund that was announced only a few weeks ago. I think \$36 million or thereabouts was allocated to Western Australia in that first round—far less than the share of the national pot that WA should get. Two projects of ours were successful in that plus several others that we are partners in. So, yes we are accessing that and we hope to do so more in the future.

Mr F.M. LOGAN: The government does not like the tax, but it is accessing the money, is that right? Slag the tax, take the money. Unbelievable.

The CHAIRMAN: Member for Cockburn!

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I very quickly ask about the allocation of \$250 000 to save the western ground parrot under “Major Spending Changes” on page 801. Is there any other funding in this budget aimed at also addressing the declining numbers of the Carnaby’s cockatoo, the forest red-tailed cockatoo, Baudin’s cockatoo and any other of our vulnerable species, because I cannot see any others that appear there?

Mr W.R. MARMION: Of course there is in the internal budget, and the director general will be able to outline what it is in terms of the Carnaby’s cockatoo.

Mr K.J. McNamara: Clearly, the figures on page 801 are for new spending initiatives. The department’s nature conservation budget for 2012–13 is shown on page 802 and is \$149.8 million. Threatened species work is a

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major component of that and the minister made announcements a few weeks ago that something more than \$9 million has been spent on the Carnaby's cockatoo, including acquisition and protection of Carnaby's cockatoo habitat in recent years. Working on those three species of cockatoos through good forest management, reserve management and targeted projects is a significant priority in our threatened species work. Threatened species work makes up a very substantial proportion of that \$149 million.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: The latest cocky count carried out only a month or so ago shows a further decline in numbers and I would question whether under the minister we will see the extinction of another species. I remind the minister that his government let the cane toads into Western Australia —

Mr F.M. LOGAN interjected.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: That is right. I would be very interested whether we will see a couple of extinctions in Western Australia under the minister's watch. It is probably likely, though, that he might be the one who is extinguished before the animals or major fauna are!

The CHAIRMAN: Member for Mandurah, would you please address your comments to the Chair.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Yes, of course. Would Mr Chairman like me to start again?

The CHAIRMAN: We wanted to finish at 7.45 pm and we are just about ready to finish.

The appropriation was recommended.

[7.50 pm]