

DEPARTMENT OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATION —
COST RECOVERY DISCUSSION PAPER

899. Hon KEN BASTON to the Minister for Environment:

I refer to the “Discussion Paper on cost recovery for the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation”.

- (1) During the process of authoring this discussion paper, did the department also seek to identify inefficiencies such as duplications or overly burdensome conditions that could reduce the cost burden to the department of issuing licences and permits?
- (2) If yes, what inefficiencies were identified?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

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

- (1) No. This was out of the scope of the discussion paper. However, the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation and its predecessor, the Department of Water, have had a five-year regulatory efficiency program for the water business, REFOCUS. A complete review of water licence conditions was undertaken, a new water online digital system has been built, a regulatory capability division established, staff trained and advice to licensees reviewed.

Since the amalgamation of departments on 1 July 2017, there has been a concerted effort for all regulatory—clearing, water, industry and compliance—functions in the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation to be coordinated and improved to reduce red tape and increase efficiency of procedures. In addition, the department is progressing an upgrade of its digital systems for environmental licensing, and the proposed clearing and industry fee increases will help fund more licensing officers and support improved guidance to applicants.
- (2) Not applicable.