

ABORIGINAL HERITAGE — LANDOWNERS — OBLIGATIONS

321. Hon STEVE MARTIN to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs:

I refer to the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2021 and the Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972.

- (1) What steps has the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage taken to inform WA rural landholders of any obligations they may face in relation to waterways governed by the Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972?
- (2) Have landowners been advised of changes to their obligations under both acts in light of the recent amendments; and —
 - (a) if yes, how was this undertaken; and
 - (b) if not, why not?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

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

- (1) The government's *Aboriginal heritage due diligence guidelines* assist landowners and land users to understand their obligations under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972 and inform their risk-management decisions. When a place of importance or significance to Aboriginal people is being assessed for registration, the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage informs relevant landowners and seeks their views.
- (2) The Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2021 retains the requirement that landowners and land users undertaking activities that may harm Aboriginal cultural heritage obtain authorisation prior to undertaking certain activities.

After three years of public consultation on the development of the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act and a further year of co-design, guidance material to assist landowners and land users understand their obligations will soon be published. In addition, the department will be conducting a series of public information sessions across the state prior to the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act coming into effect.