

# Hon. Dr. Steve Thomas MLC B.V.Sc

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*Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council*  
*Shadow Treasurer; Shadow Minister for Small Business*  
**The South West Liberal**



17<sup>th</sup> June 2021

The Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs Committee  
Parliament House  
4 Harvest Terrace  
West Perth WA 6005

**Your ref: A887280, Petition No. 012**

Dear Chair,

Thank you for your correspondence calling for a submission on the petition I tabled on the closure of beach access at the end of Hooley Road in Boranup.

The public has always been able to access the beach at the end of Hooley Road, but that access has been denied this year with rocks being placed to block the road. The reason given by the Government for this blockage is that the Leeuwin–Naturaliste capes area parks and reserves management plan.

There has been no record or evidence presented of significant impact or damage being caused by beach access to this beach. As can be seen in the attached parliamentary question very few vehicles have been stranded on the beach. There were three in the last five years, and in all of these cases the cars were retrieved at the cost of the owners.

There appears to be no reason to close access to this beach other than it is in the management plan. I have no doubt that the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions would be happy to remove public access to as many remote areas as possible, but this should only be done when a definite benefit can be proven.

I therefore ask you to examine this issue to determine precisely why the access was blocked (beyond Departmental policy) and whether this is reasonable.

Yours truly

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A CR", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

The Hon. Dr Steve Thomas, MLC

Member for the South West

BEACH ACCESS — HOOLEY ROAD, BORANUP

**46. Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS to the minister representing the Minister for Environment:**

I refer to the closure of beach access on Hooley Road at Boranup.

- (1) Why has beach access been blocked at the end of Hooley Road?
- (2) How many vehicles have been stranded on the beach serviced by Hooley Road in each of the last five years?
- (3) Has the department or the government charged vehicle owners for retrieval of vehicles on this beach in each of the last five years; and, if so, how many and at what cost?
- (4) Has the government had to retrieve vehicles from this beach at its own cost; and, if so, how many and at what cost?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:**

I thank the Leader of the Opposition for some notice of the question.

- (1) The beach access has been closed at Hooley Road in accordance with the *Leeuwin–Naturaliste capes area parks and reserves management plan* of 2015. The management plan stipulates that vehicle access to the Leeuwin–Naturaliste coastline will be maintained, but rationalised in accordance with the plan’s vehicle access strategy. The access strategy considers factors including the protection of environmental values, visitor safety and amenity.  
  
The management plan provides for beach access on Boranup Beach, Deepdene Beach, Kilcarnup Beach and Joey’s Nose, which equates to 15 kilometres of beach access for motorised vehicles in the Leeuwin–Naturaliste National Park.
- (2) In each of the last five years the following vehicles have been stranded: 2016–17, one; 2017–18, zero; 2018–19, zero; 2019–20, two; 2020–21 to date, zero.
- (3) No. The Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions arranged for the vehicles to be recovered by external contractors and arranged for these costs to be paid by the vehicle owners. DBCA does not have a record of the costs to the vehicle owners.
- (4) DBCA costs for ranger assistance and vehicle running associated with the recovery of vehicles from the Ngari Capes Marine Park and the adjoining Leeuwin–Naturaliste National Park are not uniquely identified within the recurrent budget.