



**The Hon Joe Francis MLA  
Minister for Emergency Services; Fisheries;  
Corrective Services; Veterans**

Min Ref: 51-12318  
Your Ref: Petition No. 127

Hon Simon O'Brien MLC  
Chairman  
Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs  
Legislative Council  
Parliament House  
PERTH WA 6000

Dear Mr O'Brien

Thank you for your letter dated 13 October 2016 regarding Petition No. 127 – Proposed Telecommunications Tower at Bell Hill Reserve, Bindoon. I would like to address the comments made under Major Concerns and Objections by Residents, dot point 7:

*"Fire Fighting Aircraft would not have freedom of choice in defending the area against fire. This is a Fire Prone Area with extremely difficult terrain (2 severe fires in 2 years) and it is totally dependent on aerial fire protection (at least 25 properties)."*

The Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) does not use aviation assets solely in the containment and extinguishment of bushfires. The Bell Hill Reserve is managed by the Shire of Chittering and the Bindoon Bushfire Brigade is the first responder for the area, with support from Upper Chittering Bushfire Brigade if required. It is inaccurate to suggest that the area cannot be defended from the ground and is reliant totally on aerial suppression.

The proposed tower at Bell Hill Reserve will have no significant impact on air operations within this area. Any new tower would be treated as a low-flying hazard and managed accordingly as is the case with other similar towers throughout the state.

Yours sincerely

**HON JOE FRANCIS MLA  
MINISTER FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES;  
FISHERIES, CORRECTIVE SERVICES; VETERANS**

- 8 DEC 2016