

GENERAL PURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE NO.5
QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE DURING THE HEARING
17 SEPTEMBER 2009

QUESTION 1

[The Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water (DECCW) has instituted a new standardised procedure for tracking visitations to parks, resulting in more accurate counts of park visitors compared to past estimates]

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: For the international visitors, is that information available as well?

Ms BARNES: Not on our website, but on the Tourism NSW website.....

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Would it be possible for you to assist us by getting a copy of that report to the committee from Tourism NSW?

Ms BARNES: The international visitors?

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Yes, the international one, and then I can put those together.

Ms BARNES: Yes

ANSWER

Tourism New South Wales' most recent report on International Travel to NSW is available at the Tourism New South Wales website. (http://corporate.tourism.nsw.gov.au/Sites/SiteID6/objLib19/IVS_snapshot_percent20YEJun09.pdf)

2.7 million international visitors visited NSW in the year ended June 2009. 49.4 per cent of these international visitors visited a National or State Park during their trip to Australia.

QUESTION 2

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK:In a call for papers on a proposal for new sporting fields at Lake Cathie, Greg Croft, regional manager of the Mid North Coast region, notes”I’m camping at Werrikimbe this weekend and will provide a detailed report on the state of the place. I’m told it’s really run down since I left.....” Minister, what circumstances have led to this park becoming “really run down”?

Ms BARNES:I am not sure of the details of that. What I do know is that our staff have very high standards, so we tend to want to keep things in the best condition possible. I need to follow up on that.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK:.....Perhaps you could take on notice my next question, which is what action has been taken to address this situation at Werrikimbe?

Ms BARNES: Absolutely

ANSWER

The reference was an unfortunate off-hand comment made by a National Parks and Wildlife Service officer to his peer. The officer had in the past been the ranger responsible for Werrikimbe National Park, and he was having a light hearted dig at the Manager currently responsible for the location.

The Deputy Director General confirmed with both Mr Croft and the Area Manager that this was banter between two officers and that as the area is an iconic visitor destination, it is maintained to a high standard.

QUESTION 3

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: The Kosciuszko Centennial Program commenced in 2006.....with an allocation in the 2008-09 budget of \$800,000.....Was the \$800,000 allocated to the Kosciuszko Centennial Program for 2008-09 actually spent Minister?

The Hon. JOHN ROBERTSON: I will ask Ms Barnes to respond.

Ms BARNES: The fund is being spent on visitor infrastructure and also restoration of things like Kosciuszko huts and Kiandra courthouse.....

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Can you give us the details of the funding for that program?

Ms Barnes:.....I will take it on notice and provide more details

ANSWER

Total expenditure from the Kosciuszko Centenary Fund in 2008/09 was over \$2 million.

A large range of projects were funded in 2008/09; \$817,544 in capital programs for infrastructure improvements and \$1.1 million for other projects including Scientific Research, as per the summary below:

(Please see table information on next page)

| Capital Projects | Expenditure \$ |
|---|-----------------------|
| Khancoban Visitors centre | 17,210 |
| Thredbo Valley Shared Use Track | 293,419 |
| Stillwell Track Upgrade - Stage 1 | 42,385 |
| Nordic Trail Fencing - Perisher | 10,000 |
| ATV 6 wheeler Thredbo Valley Track | 16,276 |
| Cumberland FT upgrade | 30,240 |
| Black Perry Lookout | 8,780 |
| Currango Homestead Mower | 16,076 |
| Mt Selwyn VES Upgrade | 383,158 |
| Total Capital Projects | 817,544 |
| Scientific Research | |
| Contribution to Frog Research | 30,000 |
| KNP POM Implementation | 135,661 |
| KNP POM Restoration Training | 9,359 |
| Subterranean Bat Monitoring | 10,339 |
| Predator Hierarchies in KNP | 29,728 |
| Hawkweed Control - Sthn PaCS, PPU | 4,906 |
| Fire Impacts on Alpine Ash - KNP | 3,911 |
| Post 2003 Fire Monitoring - KNP | 15,000 |
| Other Projects | |
| Aboriginal Liaison | 66,867 |
| Wildlife - Contributions | 6,000 |
| Khancoban Visitor Centre - Fitout | 988 |
| Ski NSW Promotion Activities | 5,000 |
| Tourism NSW Promotion Activities | 5,000 |
| Promotions Marketing | 10,074 |
| Sorrel Wilby DVD | 14,937 |
| Hawkweed Control - Snowy Mtns | 14,850 |
| Cross Country Ski Facilities | 35,000 |
| Rawsons Pass Toilet | 105,171 |
| Stillwell Track Upgrade | 17,904 |
| Climate Change Adaptations | 60,298 |
| Horse Removal | 98,135 |
| Thredbo Valley Shared Use Track | 49,376 |
| Weed Control | 29,996 |
| Glenn Sanecki Alpine Scholarship | 8,333 |
| Kiandra Courthouse Planning | 112,277 |
| Yarrangobilly Caves House 2nd Storey | 75,210 |
| Huts Reconstruction | 150,118 |
| Campground Upgrades | 12,474 |
| KCF Operating Projects | 1,116,912 |
| KCF contribution to costs associated with revenue collection & PUF Compliance (Thredbo, Perisher & Selwyn) | 172,044 |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURE | 2,106,500 |

QUESTION 4

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Can you tell me what park revenues were?

Ms BARNES:Do you have any revenues in particular you want?

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Just your visitor entry fees.

Ms BARNES:The revenue that came into the system through leasing and licensing for the last financial year was \$18.9million. Additional revenue of \$350,000 came through our commercial recreation and tour operating system.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Can you give me the projected figures for the current financial year?

Ms BARNES: I do not think I have those with me but I can give those to you on notice.

ANSWER

The Parks and Wildlife Group forecasts that, exclusive of IPART related revenue, around \$18.6 million will be received in 2009-2010 from park entry fees including day/annual fees, camping and holiday lettings.

QUESTION 5

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: In terms of the number of rangers in the Blue Mountains National Park, where would I find that information?

Ms BARNES: I can give that to you in a question on notice.

ANSWER

Blue Mountains National Park is managed within the National Parks and Wildlife Service Blue Mountains Region, which has a number of operational areas.

Management of the park involves a range of skills, expertise across different operational positions. These include:

- 12 rangers;
 - 13 Discovery Rangers who deliver special Discovery Walks Talks and Tours within Blue Mountains National Park.
 - 35 field officer positions;
 - the Blue Mountains Walking Track Team (10 Equivalent Full Time positions) which is currently undertaking major works on the Grand Canyon Track within Blue Mountains National Park;
 - 11 Specialists from the Blue Mountains Regional Office who support volunteer partnerships, fire and pest operations, asset management and maintenance, interpretation, commercial licensing, administration and accounting; and
 - 13 Discovery Rangers who deliver special Discovery Walks Talks and Tours within Blue Mountains National Park
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QUESTION 6a.

[In relation to the graph supplied when you look at the expenses that we apply to parks and the growth in hectares, you can see that the funding has been maintained across the systems]

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Why is the base year 100 if it is not adjusted?

Ms BARNES: Because that is how we are showing it in that we have tracked it from 2004-05. We wanted to make sure that we are tracking our funding, that the funding that we had to spend on parks was comparable with the hectares coming into the system, and that shows in fact it is a bit ahead,

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: But is that taking account of inflation?

Ms BARNES: I think so. I can get back to you on that.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK:I suggest that if you had to adopt savings strategies to fund pay rises then in real terms of your budget is less?

Ms CORBYN: The Government has been quite clear that we got an increase for salaries of 2.5 per cent and we need to cover the remainder of the 4 per cent.....

The Hon. JOHN ROBERTSON: We will take the question on notice and come back to you with details of the increase by comparison with inflation so that you have a clear understanding of wages and savings.

ANSWER

1. Funding includes inflation escalation increases to the Budget of the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water.
2. The funding of the Department's Budget is increased each year in accordance with a separate salary and operational cost escalation components.

The table below shows the increase in funding each year relating to inflation escalation in comparison to the average Consumer Price Index for each year.

| Budget Year | Salary Escalation per cent | Operational Escalation per cent | CPI per cent |
|-------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------|
| 2004-05 | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| 2005-06 | 4 | 3 | 3 |
| 2006-07 | 4 | 2.8 | 2.8 |
| 2007-08 | 4 | 2.7 | 2.7 |
| 2008-09 | 2.5 | 2.5 | 2.5 |
| 2009-10 | 2.5 | 2.1 | 2.1 |

3. The Parks and Wildlife Group has addressed saving requirements by implementing operational efficiencies such as improvements in fleet management and resource usage (for example, improved energy efficiency or decreased water usage).
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QUESTION 6b.

[The Hon. Catherine Cusack has been told that national parks has had its budget increased in real terms which would suggest that there has been a significant increase in some areas of the portfolio]

The Hon. ROBERT BROWN: An indication of the efficiency of your department is that in the past financial year your dollars cost per hectare has dropped.

Ms BARNES:Our total expenses per hectare, as that graph shows, in terms of an index, is increasing.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: But do we know if it is adjusted for inflation?

Ms BARNES: I can bring it back and adjust it.

The Hon. ROBERT BROWN: There is a great difference between your figures today and the ones I have brought to these estimate committees in the past couple of years. I will provide the Minister with a copy of my figures and I ask him to take on notice a question as to which one is accurate?

The Hon. JOHN ROBERTSON:Yes, I will take that question on notice.

ANSWER

The figures supplied by the Hon Robert Brown MLC prior to 2009-10 are the 'revised' expenses and revenue figures quoted in the Budget Papers.

The 'revised' figures are a mid-year estimate of the expenses and revenue to be incurred by the end of the financial year. They do not represent either the original Budget or the actual expenses and income for the financial year.

The Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water's annual report should be used for establishing actual expenses and revenues.

Figures prior to 2004-05 are not appropriate to be used for comparison purposes as these figures relate to the former National Parks and Wildlife Service and not the revised organisational structure of the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water.

The figures used by the Minister in response to the Hon Robert Brown's previous question on 16 October 2008 (General Purpose Standing Committee No. 5 question taken on notice during the hearing) and those figures presented at the recent Estimates Committee are more accurate as they represent the original Budget expenses and income, and the actual size of the park estate at the start of each year.

QUESTION 7

[The Hon. Robert Brown notes in this budget year \$91.883 million has been allocated to the Environment Trust to be distributed against grants and subsidies.]

The Hon. ROBERT BROWN: Will you provide details of what is the percentage overall of the number of grants that are field audited?

ANSWER

Around 22 per cent of Environmental Trust grants are subject to a field audit / site visit. All grants are tracked and certification of completion is required of the grantee.

Many grants are small grants to schools or research grants that would not warrant separate field audits.

QUESTION 8

[Issues of waste management and resource recovery.]

CHAIR: What is the average yearly cost to operate the Sustainability Advantage Program? What financial contributions do scheme participants make?

Mr SMITH: The Sustainability Advantage Program is one of the ones that the Department is most proud of.....so we could certainly provide more information about that. I will take the specific question about the cost-sharing arrangements on notice and provide the information to you.

ANSWER

Over the three full financial years of its operation (2006/7–2008/9) the average yearly net cost to operate Sustainability Advantage was \$1.047 million dollars.

Members make a direct financial contribution of between \$2,000 and \$3,000 each (depending on the size of the organisation) when they join Sustainability Advantage. A total of 325 organisations have joined the program as of 1 October 2009.

Members then fully fund environmental projects identified and implemented as part of Sustainability Advantage. For example, it has been conservatively calculated that members of one of the Building Products Clusters (companies such as Boral Bricks, Ontera Carpets, Dunlop Flooring, Laminex, and Fletcher Insulation) have collectively invested \$670,000 in resource efficiency projects since June 2008.

All Sustainability Advantage members also contribute significant in-kind contributions in staff time to participate in activities such as: co-ordinating involvement in Sustainability Advantage; establishing resource efficiency or broader environmental teams to identify and implement projects; attending training; engaging personnel in environmental projects; measuring, monitoring and reporting performance; attending cluster meetings to share ideas, successes and challenges.

QUESTION 9

[Issue relating to modelling for the feed-in tariff proposal, page 26 of the report to the Minister's states....complex modelling of the effect of the different scheme design elements on uptake rates would have taken a significant amount of time and was not undertaken. Instead working within the prescribed time frame the task force undertook an analysis of simple financial calculations based on assumed uptake rates.]

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK:Considering that no such modelling was done, how did the Department produce a figure of \$220 per household cost increase under the Coalition's policy, which is for a gross feed-in tariff, when no modelling was undertaken by the NSW solar feed-in tariff report to Ministers?

Mr SMITH:As I said earlier, that question should be addressed to officials from Industry and Investment.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK:I direct my question to you Minister, How could the Department of Environment, which has not seen the modelling and does not understand the figure, have provided that advice to the Minister?

The Hon. JOHN ROBERTSON: We will take that question on notice and come back to you on that point. I am not in a position to give you an answer. Mr Smith sought to give you an answer. In order to ensure we give you a clear and thorough answer we will take the question on notice and come back to you.

ANSWER

I am advised by the Department of Industry and Investment that the impacts on electricity bills of a feed-in tariff that is gross, 60c/kWh, for 20 years that covers solar, small scale wind and gas and has no eligibility limit is an increase of \$220 per household per year.

QUESTION 10

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Is it possible to get an overall figure on how much climate change funding is going to the Department of Housing and the Department of Education and Training this year for retrofittings that will make buildings more sustainable?

Mr SMITH: We will take that question on notice. Can I just clarify, are you interested in only this year?

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK:When I say "this year" can I perhaps refer to the 2009 year and the budget figures for the 2010 year?

Ms CORBYN: Do you mean 2009-10?

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: I mean 2008 and 2009 actual and 2009-10 projected?

Mr SMITH: We can provide that.

ANSWER

For the financial year 2008/09, Housing NSW received \$5.475 million from the Climate Change Fund for the installation of ceiling insulation, solar hot water systems, and water efficient showerheads into public housing. For the same period, the Department of Education and Training received \$2.336 million for full lighting retrofits for 16 high schools.

For the financial year 2009/10, Housing NSW will receive a further \$6.797 million and the Department of Education and Training will receive \$5.205 million.

QUESTION 11

The Hon. ROBERT BROWN: Minister, I would like to get clarification on some comments that Ms Barnes made earlier relating to the costs of feral animal control. I understand that the total budget for fire, weed and pest animals is about \$58 million. Is that correct?

Ms BARNES: Yes

The Hon. ROBERT BROWN: And the budget subsection for pests and weeds is about \$33 million.

Ms BARNES: Yes

The Hon. ROBERT BROWN: So therefore for fire, \$25 million – obviously. Of the \$33 million, can you give the Committee a breakdown of the weeds and pests?

Ms BARNES:I will take it on notice.

ANSWER

The breakdown is approximately \$18.5 million on weeds and \$14.4 million on Pests.

QUESTION 12 (relates to Question 30)

[Pest control – National Parks and Wildlife Service used approximately 1.4 kilograms of sodium monofluoroacetate, which is 1080 poison, in the last 12 months]

The Hon. ROBERT BROWN: Does the National Parks and Wildlife Service, in its use of 1080, have its staff mix their own baits, or do you buy proprietary baits?

Ms BARNES: I will have to take that on notice.

The Hon. ROBERT BROWN: Either way, can you tell the Committee what approximate number of baits that is?

Ms BARNES:I will have to take it on notice as well.

The Hon. ROBERT BROWN: In regards to the types of baits that you use.....all of the testing was done on dried kangaroo baits – hard baits.

Ms BARNES:.....I am not sure whether it was hard baits or others, but I can take it on notice.

The Hon. ROBERT BROWN: Secondly, can you tell me, if you do mix your own baits or buy baits, are they hard baits or are they soft baits?

Ms BARNES: I will take it on notice.

ANSWER

1. In certain situations, National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS) staff prepare 1080 baits. In other situations, NPWS collect 1080 baits prepared by a Livestock Health and Pest Authority or use commercially prepared 1080 baits such as Foxoff Fox Bait®, Paks 1080 Fox Bait®, Doggone Wild Dog Bait® and Pigout Feral Pig Bait®.

Any person preparing 1080 baits from 1080 liquid concentrate must be an Authorised Control Officer as specified in the Pesticide Control (1080 Liquid Concentrate and Bait Product) Order 2008.

2. The Pesticide Control (1080 Liquid Concentrate and Bait Product) Order 2008 allows a range of bait types to be used. For example for wild dogs and foxes, boneless meat, sausage, wingettes, eggs and commercially prepared (synthetic) baits are used; for feral pigs and rabbits, grain, carrots and commercially prepared (synthetic) baits are used.

Baits are of different sizes (weights) and are loaded with different amounts of 1080 as required for the target species and the bait type. For example, the concentrate of 1080 used in rabbit baits is: 0.18g 1080/kg carrots; 0.36g 1080/kg oats; or 0.45g 1080/kg pellets. Meat baits for wild dogs are 250g while for foxes are 100g. Commercially prepared baits for wild dogs are 60g

(Doggone Wild Dog Bait®), for foxes are 60g (Foxoff Fox Bait®) or 30g (Foxoff Econobait®) and for feral pigs are 250g (Pigout Feral Pig Bait®).

It is therefore not possible to convert 1.4kg 1080 directly into a specified number of baits.

QUESTION 13

[Graph based upon data from “Waste and Recycling in Australia, Final Report (2008) by Hyder Consulting passed around to Ministers]

CHAIR: The graph sets out NSW performance on recycling, energy recovering, leachate treatment and gas capture compared to the national average and other State jurisdictions. Why do you think recycling rates in NSW are at least a third lower than the ACT, SA and VIC?

Mr SMITH: We will need to respond in detail to check these figures.....

CHAIR: Sure.

Mr SMITH: It is probably best if we take it on notice and review the figures.

CHAIR:Why are leachate management rates in NSW 58 per cent compared to 72 per cent to 75 per cent in VIC and SA?

The Hon. JOHN ROBERTSON:Give us the report. We will take it on notice.

ANSWER

The NSW Government has set ambitious recycling targets to be achieved by 2014, and is well on the way to achieving them.

The Hyder Report, *Waste and Recycling in Australia*, was commissioned by the Australian Government in 2006 and submitted to the Productivity Commission’s inquiry into waste generation and resource efficiency in Australia. The report was updated and finalised in 2008. The accuracy of the data in the report is poor and has been criticised by all jurisdictions. The Australian Government is currently preparing an amended report.

I am advised that the 2008 report recognises that data from different jurisdictions is based on different methodologies and cannot be compared, stating, “data comparisons between the jurisdictions must be undertaken with great caution because of differences in the ways that waste is categorised and waste data is collected and reported”.

Any comparison between the jurisdictions’ landfill practices contained in the report, including gas capture, energy recovery rates and leachate management, would also be unreliable because of differences in geography and demography. In 2006-07 less than 20 per cent of NSW landfills were located in the Sydney, Hunter and Illawarra areas, which serviced 75 per cent of the State’s population. The majority of landfills in NSW are located in regional and rural areas. Historically, older regional landfill sites were not designed and built to the same standards as the larger metropolitan and coastal facilities.

The Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water provides guidance for the management and improvement of environmental landfill management practices in

smaller, local government run landfills in rural areas. An Environmental Risk Assessment and Mitigation Package, developed by the Department in consultation with council waste managers across rural regional NSW, was introduced in May 2008, and follows the risk management process detailed by Standards Australia in AS/NZS 4360:2004.

QUESTION 14

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: The projection that you had for this year was that the environment levy would add an extra \$20.5 million to the budget bottom line in 2009-10, but this year's budget, as opposed to the mini-budget, actually shows an increase of \$45 million for 2009-10. Why are you now projecting an extra \$25 million compared with what you were projecting in the mini-budget?

Mr SMITH: When we set forecasts, they are based on an assumption of the level of economic activity.....So, it is a combination of all of those factors that leads to the forecasts.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: With respect, all of those factors were included in the mini-budget, so those factors have not changed.....

The Hon. JOHN ROBERTSON:Can we take the detail on notice?

[Further conversation about the budget figures and the mini-budget figures]

The Hon. JOHN ROBERTSON:.....As we do not have those figures we are not in a position to provide that today.....we are entitled to take questions on notice, and that is what we want to do to give you a detailed answer.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK:Can you explain how that matches up with your actual landfill projections?

The Hon. JOHN ROBERTSON: I will take all of that on notice.

ANSWER

There is no discrepancy between the Mini-Budget and the 2009 Budget papers.

The Mini-Budget announced changes to the waste levy and forecasted an increase of \$45.5 million in 2009/10. As referred to in the Mini-Budget, this figure comprises an estimated \$20.5 million from the increase of levy rates, as well as the extension of the levy area. A further \$25 million has been estimated from the application of the levy to coal wash waste.

QUESTION 15

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: When the Government increased the price of waste, the amount of illegal dumping also increased. What new measures have you taken to deal with the illegal dumping associated with the increase in the cost of waste?

The Hon. JOHN ROBERTSON: We do not accept the premise of the question that there is an increase in illegal dumping as a result, unless you have something.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK:That is my question, what are the new measures that you are instituting to ensure that it does not happen?

Mr SMITH: Each time that the Government has increased the waste levy, additional resources have been provided for the department and local councils to put on enforcement and education campaigns to tackle the threat of illegal dumping.....

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Can you provide more information on that?

Mr SMITH: Yes, we will take it on notice and give you a list of the extra money and what has been done.

ANSWER

The Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water has as of 1 July 2009, put in place three new regional waste operations teams. These teams are based in Coffs Harbour, Newcastle and Wollongong, to regulate the waste industry in the Illawarra, the Hunter, and north of the Hunter to the Queensland border.

The regional offices work closely with local councils, communities and industry to minimise illegal waste disposal and to encourage waste avoidance and resource recovery. Compliance, education and regulatory campaigns are key components of this work, targeting those industries which require improvement in waste management and providing resources to assist with environmentally responsible waste management practices.

In 2008/09, the Department conducted 13 waste compliance campaigns and projects targeting the disposal of waste tyres, the transportation and disposal of liquid waste, compliance with resource recovery exemptions by waste processing and composting facilities, and illegal dumping and landfilling.

Examples of the Department's recent illegal dumping initiatives include:

- *Illegal dumping prevention and clean-up*: handbook and DVD for Aboriginal communities released in March 2009 to assist in preventing illegal dumping and cleaning up waste on Aboriginal land.
- A NSW Illegal Dumping Forum on Construction and Demolition Waste hosted in December 2008 for local councils and government land managers.
- *Know your responsibilities – managing garden waste* – educational information published in May 2009 for landscaping, tree and garden services.
- Sydney region tyre retailers, run from March to June 2009 – a waste compliance campaign including an education program and inspections of approximately 80 tyre retailers.
- *Eyes in the Sky 2008*: an illegal dumping prevention campaign with Hawkesbury City Council, which involved aerial surveillance.

The Department also closely tracks the transportation of hazardous wastes to ensure that any illegal dumping can be quickly identified and appropriate regulatory action taken. Prior approval must be obtained from the Department to transport certain substances, and documentation must be completed each time these wastes are received or transported. Approximately 85 per cent of waste movements are monitored through the Department's online waste tracking system database.

The NSW Government also contributes funds for Regional Illegal Dumping (RID) Squads. In 2008/09, Western Sydney RID Squad investigations, with support from the Department and member councils (Bankstown, Baulkham Hills, Fairfield, Holroyd,

Liverpool and Penrith), resulted in 16 clean-up notices and 396 penalty notices being issued.

The Greater Southern RID Squad is a partnership between Shoalhaven, Wingecarribee and Eurobodalla Councils and the Department, with additional funding provided by the Sydney Catchment Authority. In 2008/09, the Greater Southern RID Squad's investigations resulted in 34 clean-up notices and 78 penalty notices being issued.

QUESTION 16

[Grey-headed flying foxes - an endangered species and the issuing of licences to shoot them]

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: How many prosecutions have been mounted in the past in relation to compliance?

Mr SMITH: We will have to get those statistics to you.

ANSWER

No prosecutions have been mounted in relation to flying fox licence compliance.

QUESTION 17

[Wildlife Management Programs]

The Hon. ROBERT BROWN: Can the Minister advise the total number and the breakdown by species of kangaroos harvested under the kangaroo management plan in the non-commercial zone?

ANSWER

The Kangaroo Management Plan is the NSW Commercial Kangaroo Harvest Management Plan 2007/2011. The Plan only applies to the 14 commercial harvest management zones.

Non-commercial culling across all of NSW is not governed by this Plan.

QUESTION 18

The Hon. ROBERT BROWN: Secondly, can he advise by number and by species the number of waterfowl taken under the game bird management program?

The Hon. JOHN ROBERTSON: We will take both of those on notice.

ANSWER

Between 1 July 2008 and 30 June 2009, the following birds (by species) were taken under the game bird management program.

(Please see table information on next page)

| Species | Amount |
|----------------|---------------|
| Black duck | 503 |
| Grey teal | 371 |
| Mountain duck | 14 |
| Wood duck | 301 |
| Totals | 1189 |

QUESTION 19

CHAIR: With regard to air quality, what percentage of all environment protection licensees have agreed to negotiated pollution reduction programs (PRPs) as part of their licence?

Ms CORBYN: I will have to take that on notice.....

ANSWER

Over time approximately 31 per cent of the total number of environment protection licences have had Pollution Reduction Programs negotiated, of these approximately 19per cent were air specific.

QUESTION 20

CHAIR: Has the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water formulated a health cost for each tonne of pollution counted towards the total assessable air and water pollutant derived from the pollution load index? If that is the case, what is the cost per tonne of pollution emitted by the load-based licences?

ANSWER

In 2005, the then Department of Environment and Conservation published a report: *Air Pollution Economics: Health Costs of Air Pollution in the Greater Metropolitan Region*, based on a study by epidemiologists and economists conducted in collaboration with NSW Health. The report is available on the Department's website at www.environment.nsw.gov.au.

NSW figures on the health costs of air pollution are currently being updated through a study led by NSW Health, supported by the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water.

The state of knowledge on financial impacts of air pollution on the NSW health system was summarised in the NSW Government submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry into Health Impacts of Air Pollution in the Sydney Basin in 2006. The submission can be viewed on the NSW Parliament website at www.parliament.nsw.gov.au.

QUESTION 21

CHAIR: On a subject close to my heart, considering the Federal Government's focus on world heritage areas and cane toads in the Caring for our Country grants, what is the NSW Government doing to address this key threatening process in northern

NSW?.....Why has a Caring for our Country grant not been provided to deal with the cane toad population in NSW?

Ms BARNES: Not to the department. I need to take that on notice, but I was hopeful there was one maybe to a community group to help to drive that project. But I will take it on notice.

ANSWER

The Northern Rivers Catchment Management Authority (CMA) was granted \$40,000 under Caring for our Country for mitigating the impacts of cane toad migration into the north coast of NSW.

The CMA has contracted DECCW to undertake this project, which will involve:

- supporting volunteer work in removing cane toads
- supporting cane toad survey and collection in the field
- education and awareness raising, especially in relation to identification and programs such as Trap that Toad
- monitoring of project outcomes.

QUESTION 22

CHAIR: What percentage of the \$19.1 million local government grants program for estuary coastal and floodplain management activities will go to the coastal management program?

Mr SMITH: That program is in my area. I can give you that figure on notice.

CHAIR: Thank you. What was the 2008-09 budget for the local government grants program for estuary coastal and floodplain management activities?

Mr SMITH: I will give you that on notice as well.

ANSWER

1. 16 per cent of this year's funding for Local Government programs for estuary, coastal and floodplain management was allocated to the Coastal Management Program.
2. The 2008/09 budget for the Local Government Grants Program for estuary, coastal and floodplain management activities was \$3.15 million, \$3.067 million and \$7.97 million respectively. Other major projects funded under this program in 2008/09 included the Cooks River Piling Project, the Koorangang Wetlands Rehabilitation Project, Lake Illawarra Restoration, and the Prince Street Seawall Project.

QUESTION 23

[Discussion about the budget allocated to support joint management of national parks in NSW]

CHAIR: Does the allocation of that funding include the amount spent by the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water negotiating the amount of rent and other benefits that will be provided to the Aboriginal owners when the parks

is handed back? What amount and percentage of funding has been spent on negotiations on parks that are yet to be handed back?

Ms BARNES: I can get the details of that for you, but our budget includes money for negotiations.

ANSWER

1. Funds are allocated from the Aboriginal co-management budget for the negotiation of rent for Part 4A parks. This includes legal representation for communities, community meetings, rent negotiations and other activities considered to be a necessary part of the process of handing back of the park.
2. There are two remaining reserves listed on Schedule 14 of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* for Aboriginal ownership and leaseback to the Government under Part 4A. These are the Jervis Bay National Park and the Mt Yarrowyck Nature Reserve. Negotiations for the establishment of these lands as Aboriginal owned parks have yet to commence.

QUESTION 24

[Discussion about establishment of an Aboriginal heritage commission to ensure that Aboriginal people have more control over decisions relating to objects and sites]

CHAIR: How many of the 13 catchment management authorities (CMAs) have functional committees to advise on Caring for our Country and Aboriginal culture and heritage issues?

Ms CORBYN: CMAs do not report to me, but I deal with them regularly. I know that a number of them have Aboriginal committees.....we can come back to you with the actual numbers that have Aboriginal reference committees.

ANSWER

Four Catchment Management Authorities (CMAs) have committees specifically to advise on Caring for Our Country issues.

Eleven CMAs have committees to advise on Aboriginal culture and heritage issues.

Catchment Management Authorities without formal Aboriginal reference groups interact with their Aboriginal communities in other ways to ensure Aboriginal consultation on both Caring for Country, and Aboriginal culture and heritage issues.

QUESTION 25

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: At Taronga Park Zoo, how many elephants are in calf? What budget has been set aside to ensure that additional space will be provided to meet the needs of the growing herd? Do you want to take that on notice? I do not expect you to know that off the top of your head.

The Hon. JOHN ROBERTSON:I think we will probably have to take that on notice. My understanding is that there are three in calf.

ANSWER

The Taronga Conservation Society Australia is part of a Regional Cooperative Conservation Program (CCP) for the endangered Asian Elephant, managed by the Australasian Regional Association of Zoological Parks and Aquaria (ARAZPA).

Taronga Zoo currently has one Asian Elephant calf, with a further two cows due to give birth in 2010.

The current female Asian Elephant facility at Taronga Zoo was designed to accommodate four cows and up to four offspring at any one time. The current Bull elephant breeding facility can hold up to an additional eight animals.

QUESTION 26

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: In relation to floodplain management, is it the case that the staffing levels for effective full-time resources of the Urban Floodplain Management Program have reduced from 31.7 in 1996-97 to 15.75 in 2004-05? What is the current staffing level, and can you give me the figures for full-time staff and resources?

Ms CORBYN: I think we would not have the earliest staff figures because we, as a department, only assumed responsibility for the floodplain management program in 2007.....otherwise we will need to take it on notice.

Mr SMITH: We were set up with a specific mission, which was to tackle flood issues, to protect urban areas from flood, to improve the health of estuaries and to deal with corrosion issues.....Clearly, a great deal of work is being done on flood. We have given hundreds of grants to local councils to help them plan for flood and to support them in building levee banks and so on.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Do you have a figure on the staffing in that unit?

Mr SMITH: No, but I will get that to you.

ANSWER

1. As the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water assumed responsibility for this area in 2007, it does not have ready access to details of historical staffing levels that would enable precise comparisons to be made on a 'like for like' basis.
2. In 2009/10, 16.5 Equivalent Full Time staff are employed in urban floodplain management. Operating and employee related payments associated with urban floodplain management total over \$1.957 million. In addition, under the State Floodplain Management Program in 2009/10, grants offers totalling \$10.68 million were made.

QUESTION 27

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Perhaps you can take this on notice. How many applications have you made for Caring for Country grants and what has been the outcome?

Mr SMITH: Yes. Lots.

ANSWER

The Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water has submitted over 60 applications for contestable funding under the Commonwealth's Caring for Our Country initiative since the program began in 2008. To date the Department has secured over \$21 million in funding under the Caring for Our Country initiative.

The Commonwealth is expected to make further announcements in 2009/10 on the National Reserve System funding component of the initiative.

QUESTION 28

The Hon. RICK COLLESS: Will you advise the committee if any research has been undertaken that recommends re-establishing dingoes in national parks? Do you have plans to re-introduce purebred dingoes into any national parks in NSW?

Ms BARNES:I have not seen any proposals to reintroduce dingoes.....

The Hon. RICK COLLESS: Can you rule out reintroducing purebred dingoes into national parks?

The Hon. JOHN ROBERTSON:I will take it on notice.

ANSWER

The National Parks and Wildlife Service has no plans to reintroduce dingoes to reserve areas.

QUESTION 29

The Hon. RICK COLLESS: What are the guidelines for hazard reduction burning frequency in national parks?

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK:Will you take that question on notice?

The Hon. JOHN ROBERTSON: As a sign of goodwill we will take it on notice.

ANSWER

Hazard reduction

Hazard reduction guidelines vary across the landscape depending on the vegetation types and the bush fire zoning of the land being considered.

The primary sources of guidance for hazard reduction activities are the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water (DECCW) Fire Management Manual, (NPWS, 2009); Planning for Bush Fire Protection (RFS, 2006); and the Bush Fire Environmental Assessment Code (RFS, 2006).

Hazard reduction within each park and reserve is developed in accordance with these primary source documents, and specific guidelines are contained within both District Bush Fire Risk Management Plans and within DECCW Park and Reserve Fire Management Strategies.

Asset Protection Zones are managed specifically to protect residential and similar areas on the interface with parks and require more regular treatment than areas in Land Management Zones. The latter are treated with consideration being given to both fuel management and biodiversity conservation.

Given the variety of landscapes within the park system, DECCW has developed specific 'Reserve Fire Management Strategies' for all its parks and reserves to supplement District Bush Fire Risk Management Plans. Hazard reduction guidelines for any particular park are included in these strategies. The strategies and the primary documents referred to above are all available on DECCW's website.

Annual prioritisation and implementation of hazard reduction activities is undertaken co-operatively with other fire authorities and land management agencies represented on District Bush Fire Management Committees.

Reserve Fire Management Strategies

These Strategies are developed by DECCW and may cover either a single reserve, a number of similar reserves or areas at a landscape or bioregional scale.

Reserve Fire Management Strategies are an integral component of District Bush Fire Risk Management Plans and Bush Fire Operational Plans and are used to prepare annual fire management works schedules which meet the different requirements for planning prescribed burns, asset protection and fire trail maintenance.

In preparing Reserve Fire Management Strategies, DECCW considers any specific reserve; species; threat; and cultural heritage conservation issues identified in relevant reserve plans of management, species recovery plans, threat abatement plans or conservation management plans.

Landscape level planning such as catchment action plans, regional and local environment plans, tourism plans and vegetation and water plans are also taken into account, as well as fuels, assets and fire control advantages on adjacent land.

Community involvement

DECCW considers the protection of community assets as a key priority in determining strategies for wildfire suppression on its lands and has active community involvement before and during the preparation of all Reserve Fire Management Strategies. The mechanisms for the involvement of the community and other agencies may include:

- Regional Advisory Committees;
- public meetings;
- presentations to District Bush Fire Management Committees;
- public exhibition of draft strategies; and
- placing final strategies on DECCW's web site.

DECCW staff have made direct contact with more than 25,000 residents living near National Park managed parks and reserves to discuss boundary related issues, including bushfire protection.

DECCW has appointed specialist neighbour relations staff in each region with fire management issues as key responsibilities. These officers have initiated an active program of promoting *Community Fireguard* with owners of properties neighbouring Park and Wildlife reserves.

The Department is also working with the Rural Fire Service through the *Community Fireguard* program to improve the preparedness of the community in the event of bushfires. More than 70 staff have been trained as facilitators to show the community how best to protect their properties before and in the event of a fire.

QUESTION 30 (relates to Question 12)

The Hon. ROBERT BROWN: Earlier you took on notice a question in relation to the number of baits used by the National Parks and Wildlife Service. Will you break down that information into those baits that were ground-baiting stations and those that were aerially baited?

Ms BARNES: We can.

ANSWER

This information is not centrally held and could not be collected in the time available.

QUESTION 31

The Hon. ROBERT BROWN: Do you have any estimates done of the in-kind value to the communities over the whole of NSW?

Ms BARNES: Not over the whole of NSW. But we do studies in different areas and track those. I can give you that information about where we have done economic studies and benefits.

The Hon. ROBERT BROWN: If you could do that.

ANSWER

National parks and reserves contribute significantly to local and regional economies. Economic activity and associated employment results from local expenditure by the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water (DECCW) on park management and capital works programs, and local expenditure by visitors to national parks.

Over the last four years, the Department has carried out a number of studies into the economic impacts of DECCW-managed Protected Areas in different NSW regions.

- In 2006, the Department released the results of a study of the impacts of Protected Areas on the economy of north-east NSW. The study estimated that DECCW park management expenditure added \$17M p.a. to the North East regional economy, with associated employment of the equivalent of 265 local

jobs. Park visitor expenditure in the region added \$107M to the North East economy, with associated employment of the equivalent of 1,650 local jobs.

- A study of the impacts of Protected Areas on the economy of the NSW Far West (Pastoral Zone) estimated DECCW park management expenditure added over \$6M p.a. to this regional economy, with associated employment of the equivalent of 100 local jobs. Park visitor expenditure in the region added some \$6M to the region, with associated employment of the equivalent of 100 local jobs.
- A study of 3 regions of the NSW Wheat Sheep Belt estimated DECCW park management expenditure added \$7.5M p.a. to the economy and with associated employment of the equivalent of 140 local jobs. Park visitor spending in the NSW Wheat Sheep Belt added \$8.8M to its economy, with associated employment of the equivalent of 160 local jobs.
- A study of the impacts of DECC Protected Areas in two regions of the NSW Far South Coast estimated that DECC park management expenditure added \$8M a year to these regions, with associated employment of the equivalent of 110 local jobs. Park visitor expenditure there added around \$54M to these economies, with associated employment of the equivalent of 810 local jobs.
- An analysis of the socio-economic impact of the DECC, Commonwealth and NSW Marine Parks Authority Protected Areas on the regional economy of the Greater Shoalhaven region estimated park management expenditure added \$13M a year to the region with associated employment of the equivalent of 210 local jobs. Park visitor spending in the Greater Shoalhaven added \$152.9M to its economy, with associated employment of the equivalent of 3,220 local jobs.

In addition to the studies mentioned above, DECCW has previously undertaken studies into the contribution that national parks and other protected areas make to rural and regional economies in NSW.

For example, a study released in August 2003 showed that the Fitzroy Falls Visitor Centre in the NSW Southern Highlands provided a significant contribution to the regional economy of the Shoalhaven, Kiama and Wingecarribee local government areas. The Visitor Centre alone contributed around \$490,000 to the regional economy each year with associated employment of the equivalent of 15 local jobs. Visitor spending in the Centre and in the rest of the region added around \$28 million to the economy with associated employment of the equivalent of 570 local jobs.

QUESTION 32

The Hon. ROBERT BROWN: Is information available on the method of valuing National Parks land very five years?

Ms CORBYN: Yes.

The Hon. ROBERT BROWN: Could that be made available please?

The Hon. JOHN ROBERTSON: Yes.

ANSWER

National Parks land is valued in accordance with the Treasury Policy and Guidelines Paper (TPP 07-01) - *Valuation of Physical Non-Current Assets at Fair Value*. This policy adopts fair value in accordance with the Accounting Standard AASB 116 *Property, Plant and Equipment*.

The Department has its National Parks land re-valued, by an independent valuer on a five-year cycle to ensure that the carrying amount reflects the fair value.

The valuation methodology approach is noted in the Department's annual report.

QUESTION 33

CHAIR: According to the 2008 annual report of the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water, 6½ million hectares of NSW, or about 8 per cent of the State, is protected in national parks and reserves. How many hectares have been added to national park and reserve tenure since March 2007?

Ms BARNES: I have the number for last year, but not back to March 2007. In 2008-09, 62 areas, totalling about 129,500 hectares, were acquired under part 11 of the National Parks and Wildlife Act.

ANSWER

104,770 hectares have been gazetted and added to the national park and reserve tenure between March 2007 and 30 September 2009.

174,993 hectares have been purchased or transferred under the provisions provided in part 11 of the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 between March 2007 and 30 September 2009.

QUESTION 34

CHAIR: How many hectares of mapped rain forest has been reassessed and made available for logging under the approved private native forestry property vegetation plan since the code of practice was introduced?

Ms SMITH: Having given you all of the background on that, I would like to take that on notice. It is a matter of detail.

ANSWER

As at 31 August 2009, assessments have been undertaken for 165 out of 915 approved Private Native Forestry Property Vegetation Plans. For these 165 properties:

- 1,416 hectares that was mapped as rainforest has been assessed as not being rainforest (including 36 hectares that is now classified as old-growth forest);
- 2,533 hectares has been confirmed as rainforest;

- an additional 362 hectares that was not mapped as rainforest has now been assessed as being rainforest (including 68 hectares that had been mapped as old-growth forest).

The base rainforest map used was produced in the mid 1990s under the Comprehensive Regional Assessment to provide a basis for the Regional Forest Agreements.

A land owner preparing a Private Native Forestry Property Vegetation Plan may ask for a review of whether parts of their property meet rainforest or old growth criteria.

DECCW uses the most current available aerial imagery to assess the rainforest areas and field verification where required. DECCW records similarities and differences between the new map and the previous map.

No area that has been assessed as rainforest has been made available for forest operations under an approved Private Native Forestry Property Vegetation Plan.

QUESTION 35

CHAIR: What studies has the Department of Environment and Climate Change done on the water volumes and flood frequency needed to improved the health of the Ramsar-listed Hunter estuary wetlands?

Mr SMITH: I will take that on notice.

ANSWER

The then Department of Environment and Climate Change (DECC) managed a specific study in relation to water volumes and flood frequencies required to improve the health of the Ramsar-listed Hunter estuary wetlands. The study, 'Tomago Wetland Hydrological Study, Kooragang Nature Reserve' was conducted in 2005 by the Water Research Laboratory as part of the Tomago Wetlands Rehabilitation Project.

The Department has also provided technical and financial support to other initiatives, for example the Kooragang Wetland Rehabilitation Project led by the Hunter-Central Rivers Catchment Management Authority, which researched the Ramsar-listed Hunter estuary wetlands.

QUESTION 36

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Minister, can you explain why the Government has failed to declare as wilderness, under the Wilderness Act, the Green Gully addition to the Macleay Gorges wilderness area of 12,600 hectares which was acquired following a major fundraising campaign by the Foundation for National Parks and Wildlife in 2003?

The Hon. JOHN ROBERTSON: I will take that on notice.

ANSWER

There is a detailed process for identifying, assessing and declaring wilderness areas, which includes various administrative and legal steps. I am advised that these tasks have been completed for Green Gully, and it is intended that it be declared as wilderness in the near future.

QUESTION 37

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: I recently visited Montague Island and it was fantastic.....When are programs to eradicate rodents likely to be introduced to Lord Howe Island?

Ms CORBYN: There is quite a significant program for rat eradication for consideration by Lord Howe Island. A separate board manages the island. It has applied for and been successful in the past in getting grants under Caring for our Country. There is a very significant scientific basis for trying to bring forward the rat eradication program on Lord Howe Island.....

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Is there a target commencement date?

Ms CORBYN: It depends in part on Caring for our Country grants as well.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: How much funding do you believe is required?

Ms CORBYN: I cannot answer that because I am not actually on the Lord Howe Island Board.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK:.....Do you know what the budget would be if money were available?

The Hon. JOHN ROBERTSON: I will take it on notice because I am.

ANSWER

The total amount applied for through the Australian Government's Caring for our Country Program for a rodent eradication program on Lord Howe Island is \$8 million, consisting of \$2.35 million for planning and preparation, and \$5.65 million for operations.

Preliminary costings for Lord Howe Island Rodent Eradication program;

| <i>Year</i> | <i>Estimated Cost</i> |
|--------------------|------------------------------|
| Year 1 | \$1,812,464 |
| Year 2 | \$2,921,120 |
| Year 3 | \$3,273,762 |
| Total | \$8,007,364 |

QUESTION 38

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: When is Fridge Buyback going to be extended to the regions?

Mr SMITH: It has been extended to regions progressively. It is in the Illawarra and the Hunter.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: When do you envisage it will be extended to the rest of the State?

Mr SMITH: They have not committed to take it to the whole State because it is not cost effective to do so in extremely remote areas. I will give you an update on notice of the schedule for the other regional centres.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: You indicated it was going to be extended so I was wondering if I could get some more information on that program.

Mr SMITH: Sure.

ANSWER

The Fridge Buyback Program has recently been expanded to cover the Illawarra, Central Coast and Blue Mountains areas.

Other regional centres to be included in the program are Coffs Harbour, Port Macquarie-Hastings, Port Stephens, the Tweed and Wagga Wagga local government areas. The timing of further expansion will depend on logistical issues such as transportation, storage capacity, and the support of local councils in encouraging community participation.

QUESTION 39

CHAIR: Has a reservation program been funded for the Gardens of Stone Stage 2 reserve proposal and, if so, what progress has been made in relation to the reservation and when will these reservations take place?

Ms BARNES: I would like to get you the detail on notice but I can say we are working through a process around Mr Airlie and then moving across to Gardens of Stone.

ANSWER

The Gardens of Stone Stage 2 proposal identifies three main sites within the western Blue Mountains that are considered suitable for reservation under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* (NPW Act). These sites are Mt Airly-Genowlan Peninsula, Ben Bullen/Wolgan State Forests and the Newnes Plateau. DECCW has undertaken a review of current and future land uses at each site to determine whether reservation is both warranted and feasible.

Currently, DECCW is giving priority to the reservation of the Mt Airly-Genowlan Peninsula as a State Conservation Area (SCA). Given that an approval exists for underground coal mining below the proposed SCA, DECCW undertook to work closely with the then Department of Primary Industries (DPI) Minerals, to develop a draft plan of management for the site, prior to its gazettal. The draft plan is now complete and is regarded by both agencies as an appropriate framework enabling conservation and mining interests to co-exist.

DECCW, DPI (Minerals) and the Department of Planning are currently progressing outstanding issues relating to future planning approvals at the site should it be gazetted. It is hoped that resolution of these issues will allow reservation of the area under the NPW Act to proceed. DECCW considers that the planning process currently being applied to the proposed Mt Airly SCA should establish a precedent for further cooperation with DPI and other NSW government departments for the purposes of progressing the reservation of Ben Bullen/Wolgan State Forests.

I am advised that the reservation of the Ben Bullen/Wolgan State Forests requires the support of NSW Forests and DPI (Minerals), as underground coal mining continues in the area. As with Mt Airly-Genowlan Peninsula, it is likely that a SCA would be the most appropriate reserve category under the NPW Act for the Ben Bullen/Wolgan State Forests.

The proposed reservation of Newnes Plateau is a far more complicated matter. Current site use is having a significant impact on natural heritage values and significant resources would need to be invested in both rehabilitation and recreation management before reservation under the NPW Act would be appropriate. In addition, the broader community and relevant industries would need to substantially modify their use of the site, as current usage for timber harvesting, recreation, and surface mining is largely incompatible with reservation under the NPW Act. In the interim, DECCW remains part of a coordinated management approach at the site, has established good communication with other land managers, and is working through the issues in a very collaborative way.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Robertson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

John Robertson MLC
Minister for Climate Change and the Environment