

TREE TOP WALK, VALLEY OF THE GIANTS, SALE OF BEVERAGES

2753. Mr M.G. House to the Minister for the Environment

- (1) Is the Minister aware of a proposal by the Department of Conservation and Land Management to sell beverages to the public at the Tree Top Walk in the Valley of the Giants?
- (2) Is the Minister aware of concerns raised by the communities of Nornalup, Walpole and Bow Bridge that such an activity would have a negative impact on small business operators in the area who are endeavouring to cater to the public needs for food, refreshment and accommodation?
- (3) Does the Minister believe that it is acceptable for a Government agency to establish a commercial operation that places it in direct competition with existing local businesses?
- (4) Will the Minister define the role of the Department of Conservation and Land Management?
- (5) Will the Minister define the 'core business' of the Department of Conservation and Land Management?

Dr J.M. EDWARDS replied:

1. Yes.
2. Yes.
3. The Tree Top Walk already currently provides cool drinks and water to meet short term needs of visitors to the site. These refreshments were provided in response to the numerous requests from over 200,000 visitors annually to the site. It is not considered that a coffee machine would be in direct competition with local businesses as the Department of Conservation and Land Management is not intending to serve food or provide café seating, as that service is catered for by local operators.
- 4.&5. The functions of the Department of Conservation and Land Management are set out in section 33 of the Conservation and Land Management Act 1984. In particular, section 33(1)(da) makes it a function of the Department "to promote and facilitate public recreation, in accordance with this Act, on land to which this Act applies".