

SCHOOLS — *PRINCIPAL'S GUIDE TO BUSHFIRE:*
PREPARE YOUR SCHOOL FOR THE BUSHFIRE SEASON

83. Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Education:

I refer to the *Principal's guide to bushfire: Prepare your school for the bushfire season*.

- (1) How many schools does the policy apply to?
- (2) Of those identified in (1), how many schools have —
 - (a) an extreme-risk rating level; and
 - (b) a very high-risk rating level?
- (3) What funding is available to schools in 2023–24 to mitigate very high and extreme bushfire risk?
- (4) Given that these schools are required to pre-emptively close when the fire behaviour index is forecast to exceed 75, does the department consider the risks associated with children remaining at home, potentially unsupervised, during periods of extreme fire danger?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

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

- (1) There are 162 public schools currently rated as extreme or very high on the bushfire zone register.
- (2)
 - (a) There are 59; and
 - (b) there are 103.
- (3) The Department of Education has a budget totalling \$1 450 200 to prepare bushfire risk assessment and treatment plans as part of mitigating the bushfire risk for public schools primarily rated as extreme or very high on the bushfire zone register.
- (4) The safety of students and staff is the department's foremost priority. Although the department does everything possible to keep schools open, when an extreme alert is issued by the Department of Fire and Emergency Services, the Department of Education considers bushfire risk ratings and the fire behaviour index when deciding whether to pre-emptively close a school.