

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING — ONLINE APPROVAL APPLICATIONS

**982. Mr F.A. ALBAN to the Minister for Planning:**

Can the minister please update the house on how the government's new online planning system is saving valuable time in application processing?

**Mr J.H.D. DAY replied:**

I am certainly very happy to do so. As I have mentioned previously, having a planning and development approval system that is timely and provides decisions that are effective, efficient and well considered has been something we have been giving a lot of attention to since we have been in government. Speedy and appropriate determinations of applications, including applications for approvals to subdivide land, are important for housing affordability because the longer land has to be held without being developed, obviously the higher the costs are. I am pleased to say that the Department of Planning and the Western Australian Planning Commission have progressively been implementing the ePlan online planning system, making use of digital technology, which is progressively being introduced. Some of the planning applications that can now be submitted online include subdivision applications for both freehold and survey strata land; amended plans and reconsideration requests for subdivision applications; lodgement and endorsement of deposited plans and survey strata plans; strata plan applications, including an online payment process; and also the online submission of local government structure plans and preliminary advice requests for structure plans.

The additional use of electronic and digital technology will be rolled out over the next year, including WAPC development applications. Development assessment panel applications and local government planning scheme and scheme amendments will also be able to be submitted online. Given the Department of Planning needs to refer to quite a number of local governments and other agencies such as Western Power and the Water Corporation, the referral system is now being undertaken in an online manner. That has reduced the average referral response time from 35 days to 29 days, which is a saving of six days.

I am very pleased to say that there has been a very substantial improvement in the timeliness of decisions for the processing of subdivision applications since we came to government. In 2008–09, only 59 per cent of subdivision applications were determined within the designated time. The rate in 2014–15 was 88 per cent. The percentage of subdivision applications being approved within the designated time of 90 days increased from 59 to 88. That is a substantial improvement and is reflective of the very major effort that has been put in by the Department of Planning and staff within it, the Planning Commission, and also from within the government more widely to ensure that timely decisions are being made.