

MARGARET RIVER BUSHFIRES — PRESCRIBED BURNS

1067. Hon SALLY TALBOT to the minister representing the Minister for Environment:

I refer to the fires burning in the Margaret River area.

- (1) At what time and date did the prescribed burn escape and become uncontrolled?
- (2) Was the Department of Environment and Conservation the incident controller when the fire escaped; and, if not, which agency was?
- (3) If DEC was the incident controller when the fire escaped, when did DEC hand over that role and to which agency?
- (4) At what time and date did the state emergency coordination group meet for the first time?
- (5) What advice did the state emergency coordination group provide to the minister on the management of this emergency?

Hon HELEN MORTON replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question.

- (1) The Department of Environment and Conservation received information that the burn had escaped at approximately 10.00 am on 23 November 2011.
- (2) DEC was in control of the prescribed burn and appointed an incident controller when the burn escaped.
- (3) The Fire and Emergency Services Authority assumed control of incident at 7.00 am on Thursday, 24 November 2011. A DEC incident controller remains in place with a multi-agency incident management team.
- (4) The state emergency coordination group met at 1.30 pm on Wednesday, 23 November.
- (5) It is the responsibility of the Department of Environment and Conservation to provide the minister with advice. The minister's office received the department's 10.37 am advice notice that there was a bushfire in the area as a result of one of DEC's prescribed burns. The director general called the minister's office prior to 11.00 am to advise of the potential seriousness of the bushfire, and kept the minister's office and the minister fully informed throughout yesterday, overnight and today. In addition, the minister spoke to the director general at length last night regarding the fire.