

WATERLOO-BUSSELTON TRANSMISSION LINE, ROUTE

159. Hon BARRY HOUSE to the minister representing the Minister for Energy:

- (1) Why did Western Power rule out the option of taking the new 132-kilovolt transmission line linking Waterloo and Busselton along the disused railway reserve?
- (2) What advice was sought and obtained from government agencies, adjoining landowners and community groups on this route?
- (3) Will the minister table the advice used to come to the conclusion that this route would not be used?
- (4) If not, why not?

Hon TOM STEPHENS replied:

- (1) Western Power ruled out the option of locating the transmission line within the rail corridors between Boyanup, Capel and Busselton for a number of reasons. Broadly speaking, certain sections of the rail corridor are so physically obstructed or constrained that locating a transmission line within the corridor would be impossible. Also, if the rail corridor was selected, a significantly higher number of dwellings would be within 100 metres of the line and environmental risks would be heightened. It should be noted that the rail corridor between Boyanup and Capel is a rail corridor rather than a rail reserve and until recently was active. It is still considered to be an active line. The Capel to Busselton section is a rail reserve under the control of the Western Australian Government Railways Commission and is not active. The tracks have been removed but the corridor is being retained for possible future use as a passenger rail service to Busselton.
- (2) A Western Power field officer obtained advice about the retention of the corridor between Boyanup and Capel from Westnet Rail Pty Ltd in Picton. This was reaffirmed by WAGR at a senior level. Information regarding the retention of the rail reserve between Capel and Busselton as a possible future passenger service was provided by WAGR. Information regarding declared rare flora and priority species was obtained from Department of Conservation and Land Management records. As it was evident that the rail reserve option was not viable, no further advice was sought or deemed necessary.
- (3) No.
- (4) The above advice was provided either verbally and, therefore, cannot be tabled, or obtained from a CALM database of declared rare flora and priority species, which is available to the public.