

BUSH RURAL LAND, CLEARING

251. Hon BARRY HOUSE to the minister representing the Minister for the Environment and Heritage:

I do not mind if the minister strays and answers the previous question when he answers mine. This is the same question I asked yesterday and it appears there was a breakdown in communication between the officers who lodged this question. However, that is water under the bridge.

- (1) Is a person who owns bush rural land able to clear some of his or her property without the approval of the Environmental Protection Authority or other government departments?
- (2) If so, how much land can the owner of bush rural land clear without notification?
- (3) Will the Environmental Protection Amendment Bill 2002 change this?

Hon TOM STEPHENS replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of this question. The Minister for the Environment and Heritage has provided the following reply -

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Up to one hectare of land can be cleared without notification. Beyond that amount the landowner is required to notify the Commissioner of Soil and Land Conservation if the clearing will lead to a change of land use.
- (3) Yes. Approval may not be required for purposes such as the construction of lawful dwellings and fencing, the clearing of fire access tracks and the collection of firewood. Permits will be required for general clearing.