

LAND CLEARING PRIOR TO EPA ASSESSMENT

863. Dr EDWARDS to the Minister for the Environment:

- (1) What action has been taken to amend the Environmental Protection Act 1986 to prevent landowners from clearing prior to having their applications assessed by the EPA?
- (2) When is it expected that the amendments will be presented to Parliament?
- (3) What interim action will be taken to prevent clearing prior to EPA assessment?
- (4) Has a review of the regulations under which the Soil and Land Conservation Commissioner works been undertaken to clarify the issue of what constitutes a land use change?
- (5) If not, why not?
- (6) What interim action will be taken to clarify the issue of what constitutes a land use change?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

- (1-2) Consultation and drafting are occurring for an Environmental Protection Amendment Bill which is intended to be introduced to Parliament next year. The Bill will include provisions which make it an offence for landowners to undertake unauthorised land clearing.
- (3) All relevant Government agencies co operate under the Memorandum of Understanding for the protection of remnant vegetation on private land in the agricultural region of Western Australia to make landowners aware that land clearing should not proceed until all necessary approvals are obtained.
- (4-6) These questions should be directed to the Minister for Primary Industry.