

BIODIVERSITY, CONSERVATION AND ATTRACTIONS — PROCUREMENT

904. Hon TJORN SIBMA to the minister representing the Minister for Environment:

I refer to the following assessment by the Assistant Auditor General on page 66 of the *Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions 2021–22 annual report* —

I identified significant weaknesses in the procurement controls designed and implemented by the Department, specifically in the use of purchase orders and authorisation limits of expenditure. The combined weaknesses increase the risk of erroneous or fraudulent payments and ordering of inappropriate or unnecessary goods or services.

- (1) Who is responsible for the existence of these weak procurement controls within the department?
- (2) For how long have these controls been at such a deficient standard?
- (3) Can the minister guarantee that no erroneous, fraudulent, inappropriate or unnecessary expenditure has occurred because of these substandard controls?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. The following answer was provided to me by the Minister for Environment.

- (1) The accountable authority and the chief finance officer are responsible for the design and implementation of procurement controls for the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions.
- (2) The weaknesses in procurement controls were identified in the final financial audit for the 2021–22 financial year.
- (3) No erroneous, fraudulent, inappropriate or unnecessary expenditure was identified during the course of the 2021–22 financial audit through testing of the procurement control system.