

HERITAGE ASSESSMENTS, NUMBER

1540. Mr Edwards to the Minister representing the Minister for Heritage
- (1) In reference to the number of places assessed by the Heritage Council in 2002/03 and the target figure for 2003/04 -
 - (a) how many places are currently under consideration and review by the Minister;
 - (b) what are the names and locations of each of these places; and
 - (c) on what date was each of these heritage assessments submitted to the Minister's office by the Heritage Council?
 - (2) In reference to the Significant Issues and Trends, second dot point, on page 660 of the Budget Estimates for 2003/04 which states 'there is likely to be a significant reduction in new grants incentives available to private owners in 2003/04' -
 - (a) how is this cut of \$955,000 anticipated to impact on the work of the Heritage Council;
 - (b) how is this cut anticipated to impact on private owners of heritage places; and
 - (c) what financial incentives, other than the amount provided over the next two years, are available to private owners of heritage listed places?
 - (3) In reference to the fourth dot point of Significant Issues and Trends on page 660, and given the general lack of understanding by the public about the heritage listing process, its implications and incentives, how will the Heritage Council 'enhance its community education and information programmes'?
 - (4) In reference to the Education and Promotion heritage services line item that shows a reduction in hours for this service, and noting that the Significant Issues and Trends indicates the need for an increased focus on community education and information, why is this line item showing a reduction of 45 hours from the 2002/03 budget to the 2003/04 target?
 - (5) In reference to the fourth dot point of Major Achievements for 2002/03 on page 663 -
 - (a) will the Minister demonstrate what has been achieved through the expansion of the Regional Heritage Advisory Service; and
 - (b) how many places were nominated for inclusion on the State Heritage Register through the Regional Heritage Advisory Service?
 - (6) In reference to the Accommodation costs listed on page 665, and the reported increase in those costs from \$42,000 in 2001/02, to \$78,000 for 2002/03 and future years, what is the reason for this substantial rise in accommodation costs?
 - (7) In reference to the Conservation Incentives Programme and the fixed amount of \$10,000 over this next year and subsequent years, why has this amount not been increased in line with the CPI?
 - (8) In relation to the grant for Cossack and its increase from \$120,000 to \$260,000 for 2003/04, what will the increase in this grant achieve in terms of the conservation of Cossack?
 - (9) How will the effectiveness of the Heritage Loan Scheme Interest Subsidy be measured?
 - (10) What are the reasons for reducing the grant for the Heritage Loan Scheme Interest Subsidy from \$80,000 to \$35,000 in 2003/04?

Dr J.M. EDWARDS replied:

- (1) (a)-(c) As of X August 2003, there were X places currently under consideration and review by me. The name, location and date of submission to the Minister's Office of each place is as follows:
- (2) (a)-(c) The reduction in new grants incentives to private owners in 2003-04 is not expected to impact negatively on the normal work of the Heritage Council for the following reasons:

The grants budget in 2002-03 received a significant one-off boost in order to fund a number of specific election commitments, namely XX;

There has been an increase of \$500,000 per year in the Lotteries Commission's heritage grants;

A new heritage loan scheme was launched in July to assist private owners, local authorities and community groups in preserving their properties.

An additional \$1million has been allocated in the 2004/05 budget estimates in capital funding to the Heritage Council for conservation assistance;

Federal Cultural Heritage Grants Program is available to owners of privately owned places.

- (3) The Heritage Council is working to increase understanding and awareness of heritage in the wider community and to provide relevant and timely information to new and existing owners of heritage places via the following means:
- Upgrading websites facilities – including expanded and regularly updated online information.
- Workshops and seminars – explaining heritage act requirements and the significance of heritage in our community, including identification of the ‘opportunities’ associated with heritage.
- Publications – updating and refocussing publications to ensure information is provided in easily understood formats, and relevant to the needs of stakeholders including the development of case studies.
- Providing first hand information to regional WA – from the Regional Heritage Advisory Service and via presentations in regional areas on specific heritage related issues.
- (4) The minor reduction in hours relates to the change in hours under the General Agreement. The target hours for 2003-04 are higher than the 2002-03 Estimate. In FTE terms, the target hours for 2003-04 are greater than the 2002-03 estimated or actual hours.
- (5) (a) Recognising that 70% of heritage places are located in regional areas, the contribution of regional advisers is crucial to the effective operation of the Heritage Council in respect of contact and information flow to regional communities, research and advisory service to the Perth Office. Some of the benefits have included:
- More property owners have been provided with advice, with less waiting time for that advice
- Local governments have been able to access more advice in relation to development proposals or other issues such as local incentive schemes
- The advisers’ brief has been broadened and they have become more closely involved in heritage projects with a tourism or economic development focus.
- (b) It is not possible to ascertain this information from our records without extensive research of council records. However, advisers have been assisting the Heritage Council with its backlog review program and that has led to a number of places being included in the Council’s assessment program.
- (6) The Heritage Council leases its premises from the Department of Housing and Works. The leasing payments have been raised in line with valuations supplied by the Valuer General.
- (7) The budget estimate of \$10,000 for the Conservation Incentives Program is considered adequate relative to the previous year’s actual expenditure. The program has essentially been superseded by the Heritage Grants Program.
- (8) The funding assist the Shire of Roebourne with the running costs associated with Cossack pending. This will complement the major investment in new services and tourism infrastructure in the townsite by the Pilbara Development Commission and the Shire of Roebourne, which was assisted by a \$1.3 million grant from the Regional Investment Fund.
- (9) The Scheme’s effectiveness will be measured by:
- Number of projects assisted;
- Dollar value of conservation works assisted;
- Amount of projects which proceed as a direct result of the scheme;
- Number of applications received;
- Ratio of successful to unsuccessful applications;
- Balance achieved in the spread of projects across participating councils;
- The extent to which other councils enter the scheme, over time.
- (10) The amount of \$35,000 in 2003-04 for the Heritage Loan Scheme Subsidy is an increase of \$5,000 over the amount allocated for 2002-03. The \$80,000 figure for 2002-03 was inclusive of the budget for 3 back-years: \$30,000 for 2002-03, \$25,000 for 2001-02 and \$25,000 for 2000-01. The \$35,000 budgeted for 2003-04 therefore represents an increase in the ongoing annual contribution.

[See also paper No 1473.]