

MARGARET RIVER-BUSSELTON — AIRPORT UPGRADE FEASIBILITY STUDY

624. Hon BARRY HOUSE to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure:

- (1) Is the state government undertaking a feasibility study into the merits of a major airport in the Shires of Busselton and/or Augusta-Margaret River?
- (2) If so —
 - (a) who is undertaking the study;
 - (b) what is the cost; and
 - (c) what is the criteria and time frame?

Hon ADELE FARINA replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of this question. The minister provides the following answer.

- (1) Yes, Tourism Western Australia, with the support of the Department for Planning and Infrastructure, has tendered for external advice to determine the demand for an airport in the south west capable of accepting larger aircraft. The agencies have developed the tender documentation with close consultation with senior officers of the Shires of Busselton and Augusta-Margaret River.
- (2)
 - (a) The tender closed on 26 May 2008 and has not yet been awarded. A selection process is currently underway to identify a successful bidder;
 - (b) the estimated cost to undertake the study was up to \$100 000. As the tender has not been awarded, the exact cost has not yet been determined; and
 - (c) the feasibility study will determine the viability of intrastate and interstate air services to the region, and consider population and visitation benchmarks that support the viability of other successful Australian regional airports. The draft study is anticipated to be completed within 16 weeks of the contract being awarded.