

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (COST RECOVERY) REGULATIONS 2021 — FEES

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

I refer to the minister's disclosure last week that the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation has temporarily suspended charging cost recovery fees for Environmental Protection Act, part IV, environmental assessments.

- (1) When was this decision made and by whom?
- (2) Was it not the very purpose of implementing these cost recovery fees for the department to recoup its operational expenses for undertaking its statutory responsibilities during periods of high demand?
- (3) If no to (2), what is the purpose of charging cost recovery fees for environmental assessments?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

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

- (1)–(3) The decision to temporarily suspend invoicing was an operational decision made in the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation. As per the response to the member's earlier question dated 12 October 2022, normal invoicing processes will resume shortly and no government revenue will be foregone.