

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (COST RECOVERY) REGULATIONS 2021

1091. Hon TJORN SIBMA to the minister representing the Minister for Environment:

I refer to the draft Environmental Protection (Cost Recovery) Regulations 2021.

- (1) Noting that the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation will not rule out the potential for over-recovery of fees and/or the cross-subsidisation of other departmental and government functions and that DWER is unlikely to deliver any processing efficiencies as a result of the measure and that there has still been no disclosure of the datasets underpinning the proposed cost-recovery model, will the minister commit to directing an independent audit of the cost-recovery scheme 12 months after it comes into effect?
- (2) If not, why not?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

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

- (1) The head power enabling cost recovery precludes the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation from over-recovery of fees. The pricing model includes only costs associated with delivery of services under part IV, divisions 1 and 2. Further, and to ensure that there is neither over-recovery nor cross-subsidisation of other functions, the pricing model is based on recovering a maximum of 80 per cent of the total costs of delivering these functions.

Regarding process efficiencies, DWER has been clear with stakeholders that efficiencies will be rolled out over the coming months as a result of recent amendments to the Environmental Protection Act 1986 and the development of Environment Online. To ensure that these efficiencies are appropriately accounted for and incorporated into future cost-recovery models, and in response to feedback received from stakeholders during the extensive consultation on cost recovery, an additional regulation has been drafted to require the chief executive officer of DWER to initiate a review of fees as soon as practicable after 1 July 2023.
- (2) Not applicable.