

FISHERIES — WESTERN ROCK LOBSTERS

1616. Mr D.J. Kelly to the minister representing the Minister for Fisheries:

I refer to Recommendation 4 of the *Western Rock Lobster Low Puerulus Risk Assessment* report produced following the two day workshop of 1 and 2 April 2009, held at the Western Australian Fisheries and Marine Research Laboratories Hillarys, and I ask:

- (a) was Recommendation 4 adopted by Government wholly or in part;
- (b) if it was adopted in part, then:
 - (i) why was it not adopted in full;
 - (ii) which parts were adopted;
 - (iii) what implementation has occurred; and
 - (iv) what discernable impacts have been observed; and
- (c) if Recommendation 4 was not adopted at all, why not?

Mr T.R. Buswell replied:

- (a) Recommendation 4 has been adopted in full
- (b) (i)–(ii) Not applicable.
 - (iii) There was a significant proactive management response taken well before lobsters arising from the low puerulus years entered the fishery. Significant reductions in fishing effort (in the order of 40–70%) and catch were implemented from 2008/09 and a catch quota system was introduced in 2010/11. A closed area was implemented for the Big Bank area, which is north of the Abrolhos Is., as anecdotal information indicated there had been a decrease in stock abundance in that area.
 - (iv) The effort reduction and subsequent catch quota setting has resulted in increased catch rates by fishers and this early management intervention has resulted in the breeding stock being at record-high levels in recent years. The spawning stock in the Big Bank region has also improved considerably since the closure in 2009.
- (c) Not applicable.