

CALM, MOBILE TELEPHONE CHARGES, FAILURE TO SUPPLY INFORMATION

2697. Mrs C.L. Edwardes to the Minister for the Environment

I refer the Minister to the answer to question on notice No. 2379, asked on 16 December 2003, and ask -

- (a) why is it that, when all other departments and agencies are able to supply information on mobile telephone charges the Department of Conservation and Land Management have been unable to supply the information requested in question on notice No. 2379;
- (b) will the Minister investigate and direct the department to supply the information as requested in question on notice No. 2379; and
- (c) if not, why not?

Dr J.M. EDWARDS replied:

- (a) Mobile telephones in the Department are managed on a regional basis, in accordance with an internal Circular that sets out management requirements. In response to question on notice number 2379, I explained that mobile telephone services are purchased by the Department under the Government's mandatory Basic Telecommunications Services Contract. As part of the normal process of checking invoices, all mobile telephone accounts are reviewed by incurring and certifying officers prior to payment. A number of mobile telephone service providers have been used by the Department since July 2000. Fixed and mobile telephone expenses have been recorded against a common account number for communication costs in the Department's Chart of Accounts. As a consequence, it was unfortunately not possible to provide information on mobile telephone charges as a separate category to other communication costs, on a monthly basis for the last three years, as requested in question on notice number 2379, without a significant manual effort requiring extraction of individual telephone invoices.
- (b)-(c) I have reviewed the situation and, given the significant manual effort required to provide the detailed information originally sought, I am not willing to require the Department of Conservation and Land Management to allocate resources to this task.