

CONSERVATION AREAS — DIEBACK PROTECTION

778. Hon SALLY TALBOT to the Minister for Environment:

- (1) What measures does the Department of Environment and Conservation use to protect areas that are dieback-free from the threat posed by people using walking tracks through non-affected areas?
- (2) Has any monitoring been done at any stage to find out whether people comply with these measures?
- (3) Are any of the measures policed for compliance?

Hon DONNA FARAGHER replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

- (1) The Department of Environment and Conservation uses a number of measures to protect high conservation value areas and areas with high visitation that are dieback-free. When trails are first established, they are positioned in the lowest risk areas and construction standards aim to further reduce the risk of disease establishment and/or spread. Other measures include boot cleaning stations at trail heads and boardwalks across wet areas. In addition, signage is installed at the trail head, informing the public that it is a dieback protection area and asking that the public stay on existing tracks, avoid wet areas and ensure that footwear and vehicles are free of soil or mud.
- (2) I am advised by the Department of Environment and Conservation that monitoring has been conducted for compliance by recreational bushland users. For example, the department and the Bibbulmun Track Foundation have reviewed phytrophthora dieback management procedures and infrastructure for the Bibbulmun Track. Observational monitoring has been conducted at high priority sites; for example, at Lesueur National Park and at the montane threatened ecological communities and threatened flora populations in the Stirling Range National Park.
- (3) In addition to measures outlined in the answer to (2), the department undertakes enforcement when required and applies a range of other strategies, such as education and awareness, and encourages users to comply with phytrophthora management measures, such as to “stay on track” and use boot-cleaning facilities.