

BARROW ISLAND — ANIMAL DEATHS

1000. Hon SALLY TALBOT to the minister representing the Minister for Environment:

I refer to the hundreds of fauna deaths on Barrow Island.

- (1) Were all the deaths reported to the Department of Environment and Conservation as required by the ministerial conditions; and, if not, why not, and, if so, when was the minister first made aware of the reports?
- (2) What action did the minister take?
- (3) Does the minister stand by his comment that 1 500 deaths represent “no threat to any of the fauna”?
- (4) Does the minister think that DEC and Chevron are doing enough to prevent the deaths?

Hon HELEN MORTON replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question.

- (1)–(2) Threatened fauna cared for, injured or killed within the terrestrial disturbance footprint are reported to the Minister for Environment annually in the environmental performance report required under condition 5 of ministerial implementation statement 800. The 2009–10 and 2010–11 reports record 124 and 317 deaths respectively of fauna listed under the commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999. The figure of approximately 1 500 fauna deaths, given by the minister in response to Legislative Assembly question without notice 766 on 8 November, includes all mammals, birds and reptiles, not just threatened species. These are not required to be reported to the Department of Environment and Conservation; however, Chevron keeps DEC informed, and DEC informs the minister as necessary.

DEC advised the minister on 2 and 27 June 2011 and on 7 November 2011 of fauna mortalities on Barrow Island and that it was working with Chevron to refine the measures put in place to reduce the number of animal deaths.

- (3) The minister indicated that DEC suggested that there is no threat to any of the fauna populations from the incidences that have occurred. This advice is based on the population estimates of each threatened species on Barrow Island and the numbers of deaths recorded; for example, it is estimated that the golden bandicoot population on the island is between 40 000 and 60 000 individuals.
- (4) Chevron and DEC are taking all practical measures to reduce the number of animal deaths on Barrow Island. These measures are subject to review and refinement as required.