

**INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR IMPACT ASSESSMENT CONFERENCE**

*Statement by Minister for the Environment*

**MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Minister for the Environment)** [2.03 pm]: I wish to inform the House that last week in Perth we hosted the International Association for Impact Assessment's—IAIA—twenty-eighth annual conference in Perth. This was the first time this important conference was held here in Perth and only the second time it has been held in Australia. This year's conference attracted more than 720 delegates from 89 countries and was a great success. Indeed I am happy to report that many of those delegates showed great interest in the Department of Environment and Conservation's recruitment stand. I had the pleasure of opening the conference, which was a forum for advancing innovation, development and communication of best practice in impact assessment. "Impact assessment" may not be a term that excites much interest in the community, but it is something that, if neglected, would have dire ramifications for all of us. Our economy is booming, and there are an unprecedented number of development and exploration proposals of growing complexity. The environmental impact assessment process has never been more important.

The Carpenter government is committed to protecting our unique environment while supporting sustainable, responsible development. Western Australia has an important place in the development of the environmental impact assessment arena—one of the reasons it was chosen to host this conference. Our state has had an Environmental Protection Act since 1972. The update of the act introduced in 1986 is widely regarded as one of the best in the world. I am told its provisions for independent advice to government, public input and binding conditions when projects are implemented have been used as a model in several other jurisdictions in Australia, Europe and North America. More recent revisions to the act have included provisions for strategic assessment, which was a strong theme of the conference. Earlier this year I announced a review of the environmental impact assessment process in Western Australia. The review, led by Environmental Protection Authority Chairman Dr Paul Vogel, is looking at a new approach to impact assessments that will ensure better results for the environment, industry, the economy and the community as a whole.

I also take this opportunity to congratulate former long-serving public servant Rob Sippe, who received the International Association for Impact Assessment's Rose Hulman Award—the association's premier award. This award is given to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to the practice of impact assessment at a global level. Mr Sippe's work on the development of the Environmental Protection Act 1986 and his subsequent leadership of the evaluation division of the Department of Conservation and Land Management and its successors was fundamental to the impact assessment process we have in Western Australia today.