

FESA — RADIO TOWERS IN BALINGUP AND GREENBUSHES

442. Mr M.P. Murray to the Minister for Emergency Services

- (1) Is the Minister aware that in the bush fire prone areas around Balingup and Greenbushes, local bush fire volunteers and fire communication volunteers experience radio and mobile phone communication problems due to inadequate Fire and Emergency Services Authority radio towers?
- (2) When does the Government intend to address this problem?
- (3) Will the problem be addressed by next fire season?
- (4) Will the poor mobile phone coverage be addressed if and when the Fire and Emergency Services Authority towers are upgraded?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON replied:

- (1) Communications in some areas around the shires of Donnybrook-Balingup and Bridgetown-Greenbushes can be problematic at times due to the terrain in the area.
- (2) Radio communication is currently being addressed through the \$20 million state-wide Western Australian Emergency Radio Network (WAERN) project. Audits of radio tower sites and assessments of communication coverage in these shires are currently underway as part of this project.
- (3) The implementation of equipment under the WAERN project is scheduled to commence in the next three months, following completion of the audit.
- (4) Mobile phone coverage is a commercial decision made by telecommunications companies. FESA will provide feedback to mobile phone service providers regarding the issues within these shires.