

PORT GEOGRAPHE, ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE TO BEACH AND RESIDENTIAL PRECINCT

2127. Hon Murray Criddle to the Parliamentary Secretary representing the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure

Given that the environmental disasters at Port Geographe, near Busselton, continues and that community concern escalates as yet another winter approaches with the prospect of further coastal erosion, seagrass build-up and rising levels of noxious gases from rotting seagrass, I ask -

- (1) What is the Labor Government doing to reduce the erosion, seagrass build-up and other environmental damage to the beach and residential precinct at Port Geographe?
- (2) Are engineering modifications being planned for the current groyne structure?
- (3) If not, why not?
- (4) Is there a plan to reduce the levels of noxious gases (typically hydrogen sulphide) produced by rotting seagrass?
- (5) Is the current predicament of Port Geographe residents the result of a flawed coastal planning system and flawed groyne design and construction?
- (6) If so, who is responsible for remedial action?

Hon KEN TRAVERS replied:

1. A Working Group has been set up under the Chair of Hon Adele Farina MLC to pursue action to resolve the situation at Port Geographe. The Group is initiating a technical study to review the current situation and make recommendation on future operational issues including sand bypass and weed removal as well as possible additional fixed structures. The Department for Planning and Infrastructure (DPI) will continue to work with Axiom Properties to have the sand bypass and weed clearance proceed in accordance with the Port Geographe Development Deed. During 2004 the second stage of a two year agreed bypassing program to restore the beaches will be undertaken by Axiom properties.
2. Engineering modifications will be considered in the proposed study.
3. This issue will be considered in the study.
4. The issues at Port Geographe were anticipated during the planning of the facility, and appropriate maintenance flagged in the Development Deed. The Minister is concerned that action was not taken earlier by Axion to properly deal with the accumulation of seagrass wrack. However that changed last year and substantial effort was made to rectify the problem. We have made it very clear to them that a similar effort will be required from them this spring.