

CLEARING PERMITS

560. Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE to the minister representing the Minister for the Environment:

I refer to clearing permits, in particular C2 five-year purpose permits under the Environmental Protection Act 1986. Will the minister advise -

- (1) How many local governments are on the waiting list for C2 five-year purpose permits, which are they, and how long have they each been waiting?
- (2) Will the government consider introducing single assessments for clearing instead of multiple assessments; and, if not, why not?
- (3) If an applicant is refused a permit, what is the appeals process?
- (4) Is the appeals process fully resourced and functional?
- (5) Will the minister support permanent local government exemptions for clearing permits to replace exemptions that expire on 7 July 2006?

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question. On behalf of the Minister for the Environment, I am happy to provide the following response -

- (1) This question is taken on notice since considerable effort is required to provide that information.
- (2) The legislation already provides for single assessments through the use of purpose permits, which allows the clearing of different areas from time to time for a purpose specified in the application and area permits for clearing of a specified area.
- (3) If an applicant is aggrieved by a decision of the chief executive officer to refuse a clearing permit, an appeal may be lodged with the Minister for the Environment. An appeal must be in writing, it must clearly set out the grounds of the appeal and it must be received by the minister within 28 days. The Appeals Convenor will investigate the matter and provide advice to the Minister for the Environment regarding appeals under the Environmental Protection Act 1986.
- (4) Yes. Additional resources have been provided to the Office of the Appeals Convenor.
- (5) The exemption for maintenance within existing transport corridors, which is due to expire on 7 July 2006, is being made permanent following a review by a working group consisting of road managers, government and conservation interests.