

WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATION — COST-RECOVERY GUIDELINES

**1206. Hon NEIL THOMSON to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Environment:**

I refer to new cost-recovery guidance updated in June 2023 for part IV compliance.

- (1) Who was consulted about these fees before the publication of the guidance?
- (2) How were these cost-recovery fees calculated?
- (3) Will the government commit to auditing these fees and costs associated with part IV compliance?
- (4) Has the government assessed how much more revenue is likely from these fees?
- (5) If yes to (4), how much will be raised?
- (6) In relation to (5), is this published?

**Hon DARREN WEST replied:**

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. On behalf of the Minister for Environment, I provide the following answer.

- (1) The fees for part IV compliance are listed in the Environmental Protection (Cost Recovery) Regulations 2021. The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation undertook five weeks of public consultation, seeking feedback on the proposed fees and charges outlined in the discussion paper on the implementation of cost recovery. This was followed by seven briefings for peak industry bodies. The interim guideline published by the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation only determines which fee category the holder of a ministerial statement falls under. The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation has been transparent that it has not consulted on the interim guideline and that this will be followed by consultation on a draft guideline in November 2023. The public and industry will have an opportunity to provide feedback on the draft guideline.
- (2) Detailed information on how part IV compliance fees are calculated is published on the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation's website in the *Interim guideline: Determining compliance priority rating for cost recovery*, dated June 2023. As set out in the guideline, the fee categories are calculated by taking into consideration the risk to the environment, the complexity of the proposal and the level of ongoing compliance required.
- (3) The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation has previously committed to undertaking a review of the structure of the fees after 18 months.
- (4) Yes.
- (5) Compliance fees of between \$1.6 million and \$2 million are expected in the first year of implementation. However, the quantum of fees raised after the 18-month review is currently unknown.
- (6) No, this is an internal estimate only.