

Chairman; Mr Max Trenorden; Mr Mark McGowan; Dr Steve Thomas; Mr John Hyde; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr J. McGrath; Mr Mick Murray

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**Division 48: Environment, \$37 669 000 -**

Mr P.B. Watson, Chairman.

Mr M. McGowan, Minister for the Environment.

Mr K.J. Taylor, Acting Director General.

Mr R.A.D. Sippe, Director, Policy and Sustainability.

Mr M. Kerr, Manager, Waste Management Branch.

Mr P.J. Parolo, Manager, Finance and Administration, Swan River Trust.

Mr J. Sutton, Acting Manager, Air Quality.

**The CHAIRMAN:** The member for Avon.

**Mr M.W. TRENORDEN:** I refer to page 853, service 5, "Policies and Strategies to Reduce and Recycle Waste". There is a significant drop in the budget estimate for this item. Why has that figure declined sharply?

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** I thank the member for the question. The member is referring to the waste levy. As the member will recall, that was introduced in 1998 by the then Minister for the Environment, Hon Cheryl Edwardes. The levy that was introduced at that time was set at a very low level. At that time, the then opposition, of which I was a part, supported the bill on the basis that we needed to do something about the waste problem. In her second reading speech on the bill, the minister said that every man, woman and child in Western Australia produces 1.4 tonnes of waste, and she wanted that to be reduced to 800 kilograms a person by 2000. Unfortunately, it is still 1.4 tonnes of waste a person. The levy has not had the significant impact that it was hoped it would have. The corresponding situation in other states is that there has been a dramatic reduction in waste going into landfill for two reasons: firstly, because people are working out ways to create value from that waste; and, secondly, because increasing landfill costs have meant that people are producing less waste.

We have decided to move in that area - the member may have heard about it last weekend - and increase the levy so that we can put in place measures to assist. That will directly impact on and benefit the member's electorate. At the moment, some quite profound issues need to be dealt with in recycling waste, particularly in rural and regional Western Australia. One of those issues is the transportation cost of recyclable products. A lot of people in country towns, particularly the larger ones, and probably also those close to Perth, want to engage in recycling, but currently they cannot do so. The levy will not apply in country areas. However, through the provision of subsidies, the levy will provide the opportunity for areas such as those in the member's electorate to get recycling up and running. We believe it will be a benefit for country areas.

The reason the figures are low this year is that the budget was constructed before the waste levy decision was made. Now that that decision has been made, the member will see that the actual allocation next year will increase to at least \$12 million. Does that answer the member's question?

**Mr M.W. TRENORDEN:** It does in part. It is an interesting area. Is the minister seeking to change the process? I have a personal view - this is a Max Trenorden view - that what the minister has said is true. Part of the problem is that the old system, which everyone loves, is not assisting in the economic development of waste management. Is the minister considering changing those processes, which we all know very well by now? I agree with the minister that, under those processes, there has been no reduction in the amount of waste going into landfill. I gather from the minister's answer that other people have adopted a more commercial process, and that has dramatically reduced the amount of waste going into landfill.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** The money from the levy will allow us to act more commercially. We have made a commitment to the Western Australian Local Government Association that we will put in place a statutory board to manage this issue over time. We have put only a five-year process in place. A lot of people in the conservation and environmental waste movement would have liked us to increase the levy even more so that we would have more money to do things. Basically, the levy is, for want of a better word, a socialised system, whereby the money generated - there is no profit in it - is put towards providing funds to enable certain things to be done. I really like the concrete crushing machines that are used in other states. Those machines crush all the used concrete from buildings that have been knocked down so that it can be used as road base. We do not have the capital in Western Australia at the moment to provide a machine similar to that. The levy will generate sufficient funds to enable us to look at things like that. When a government has more money, it can act more entrepreneurially, I suppose is the way to put it, and generate an attack on this problem. The evidence is that other states produce less waste than Western Australia. The reason for that difference is that their levies are set at a higher level. That is why we have increased our levy. Cheryl Edwardes was quite courageous to introduce

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the levy when she did. I recall that some members of the then opposition were opposed to it. However, fortunately, we backed it, and now we have the scope to do more than is currently being done.

**Mr M.W. TRENORDEN:** I went to Olds in Alberta, Canada, many years ago. The people there take green waste, for example, to a single location and turn it into an environmental mulch that is used on roadsides and similar places. That is now being done along metres of Great Eastern Highway. Other places have been doing those things for a long time. My concern is that under our much-loved system, that waste is all being broken up. It will take a bit of courage to change that system. I think it should be changed. Is the minister saying that the increase in the levy will encourage a few private enterprise activities?

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** I will defer to Mr Michael Kerr. He might be able to give us a more definitive answer about that.

**Mr M. Kerr:** The business plan of the Waste Management Board is prepared in draft form. It has not been presented to the minister yet, because we were awaiting the decision on a levy increase. However, that plan includes quite a range of schemes that will effectively support enterprises. Obviously, I do not want to pre-empt too much, in any detailed way, about what we will be providing to the minister. However, it shifts the emphasis away from purely providing a fair proportion of the levy revenue to local government, as has happened in the past. Historically, about half the levy revenue went back directly to local government through the Resource Recovery Rebate Scheme. The intention is to expand that to industry as well, so that we will have what the board is calling a zero waste incentive scheme. That will provide a range of schemes that will be available to not just local government, but also industry. Those schemes will be in different forms to apply to different parts of the waste cycle. It will try to move the emphasis to the front end; for example, trying to recover more materials, and reusing those materials in production processes. Therefore, it will provide incentives to enable industry to do that. That is one example. There will be a range of other schemes as well that will support industry, either directly or indirectly.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** It is amazing how complex waste is. If people live an ordinary life and put their rubbish out each night, they do not ever think about it; they do not realise how complex it is. Many industries can grow from using waste, if we can get the management right.

**Mr M.W. TRENORDEN:** The minister will know that in Germany they use a conveyor belt that has the right technology to pick off pieces of waste as they go down that conveyor. That has resulted in a dramatic reduction - about 90 per cent - in the amount of waste going to landfill. We will not be able to do that, because we do not have the capacity to recycle all those materials. However, surely we could recycle a lot of them, particularly green waste, which comprises about 80 per cent - or a substantial part - of the landfill. We could do that now; it is just that we do not have the system to do it.

[3.20 pm]

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** I believe Germany also has an enormous levy. I think it might be 10 times greater than the one we are proposing. Someone told me recently it might be as high as \$100 a tonne. Of course, Europe has a much larger population, and it is spread over a much smaller area, so it faces an even more urgent problem than we face.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Are we getting into a debate here, or is the minister answering a question?

**Mr M.W. TRENORDEN:** It is a friendly society!

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** It is an interesting question.

**Dr S.C. THOMAS:** I refer the minister to the table on page 847, headed "Service and Appropriation Summary". The appropriations look relatively good. However, I am concerned about the decline in the out years. I am sure that in the lead-up to the election, that will change. I refer the minister to the line "Total Cost of Services", which is of concern, and the line "Adjustments". Although the appropriation for CALM has increased by about \$10 million this year, the total cost of services has decreased by about \$5 million. When we compare 2005-06 and 2006-07, a large part of the difference can be found in those adjustments. Why has the government budgeted for what will effectively be an additional windfall of \$7 million in 2005-06, and where will that come from; and why will there be \$11.882 million in adjustments, which makes the appropriation received by the department seem quite low? The adjustments indicate also that this financial year CALM will need to find another \$3.710 million. Therefore, even though the appropriation looks very good, the total expenditure is on the decline. That may be too complex a question for the minister to answer here and now, but I would like the minister to detail, perhaps by way of supplementary information, where these figures are derived from, and why there has been a total cost decrease. Some of that may be due to the Bellevue clean-up and so on. However, we need a breakdown of where that money is coming from, and where it is going.

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**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Although the question was quite complex, the member will note that there has been a real increase of 30 per cent in the appropriation for this agency.

**Dr S.C. THOMAS:** It is about \$10 million, or 30 per cent. I accept that.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** That is quite a good increase. The member's question was quite complex. I will defer to Mr Taylor.

**Mr K.J. Taylor:** I will give a brief response, and we can provide some more detail if required. As the member has identified, the total cost of services does apparently reduce by \$5 million in 2006-07. However, as covered by the answer to the previous question, a large portion of that decrease is reflected in the item service 5, "Policies and Strategies to Reduce and Recycle Waste". With the increase in the waste management levy, that will increase substantially to \$12 million, which will increase the total cost of services overall by about \$5 million or \$6 million. Also, in service 3, "Regulation of Contaminated Sites", there are variations from year to year, as the member has indicated, in the expenditure on different sites. There is some further carry-forward in service 3, and that will add an additional \$3 million to \$4 million to that item for the regulation of contaminated sites. That will boost the total cost of services overall, so we would expect that the total cost of services in 2006-07 to be greater than in 2005-06. The other important point is that it can be seen from the bottom line, "Total Consolidated Fund Appropriations", that appropriations have increased significantly from 2005-06 to 2006-07, and also have increased substantially from 2004-05.

**Dr S.C. THOMAS:** We also seek supplementary information about the additional nearly \$12 million in adjustments that is listed in the 2005-06 actual, and the additional \$3.710 million that is listed in the 2006-07 estimate, for total cost of services. We are happy for the minister to provide that by way of supplementary information, because the information may be rather technical and take some time to put together.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** I now have to repeat the member's question, which is not easy! The member is seeking information about why there was an adjustment of \$11.882 million in 2005-06, and why there is an adjustment of \$3.710 million in 2006-07.

**Dr S.C. THOMAS:** Yes, a breakdown of those figures.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** I am happy to provide that as supplementary information.

*[Supplementary Information No A64.]*

**Mr M.W. TRENORDEN:** It might be interesting if we could collude to make sure the member for Perth does not get a question! That might be very much in our interests!

**The CHAIRMAN:** That was a very good try! The member for Perth - who is glowing in the dark in his green shirt!

**Mr J.N. HYDE:** I will not move dissent from the ruling of the chair! I think this is a wonderful Chair! Thank you, Mr Chairman.

I refer to page 853, service 5, "Policies and Strategies to Reduce and Recycle Waste". My question relates to the tyre levy. I ask this question in light of the fact that while the minister and the Premier have been slaving away here today, I have been at the Perth convention centre, which is in my electorate of Perth, to open the Buying Green 2006 conference. That conference was organised by the Western Australian Local Government Association.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Is this a question, member?

**Mr J.N. HYDE:** Some amazing things are on show at that conference, such as recycled furniture made from plastic waste found in landfill. We are not doing that in Western Australia yet, but over east and in Europe the plastic that is going into landfill is being recycled and used to make furniture.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Does the member have a question?

**Mr J.N. HYDE:** Yes. It is also being used to make decking. Some of that decking, which is made over east, is being used in some of our national parks, which come under the portfolio of this minister. Can the minister confirm whether there is proposal to levy a fee on the disposal of used tyres, and has the revenue from this proposal been budgeted for in the next financial year?

**Mr M.W. TRENORDEN:** Used tyres are certainly being dumped in Toodyay.

**Mr J.N. HYDE:** I understand one of the minister's advisers may have fulsome information on this matter.

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**Mr M. McGOWAN:** I have some information on this matter, member for Perth. I first congratulate the member for Perth on his participation in that conference today. I hope the member for Perth wore that shirt!

**Mr J.N. HYDE:** I did. I wore green, and I rode my bicycle there!

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Excellent.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Too much information!

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** The member for Perth asked a question about too many spare tyres. A number of members of Parliament have concerns about spare tyres as well!

**Mr M.W. TRENORDEN:** I am one of them!

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Every year 240 000 tonnes of waste tyres are produced in Australia. That has now become such an issue that the commonwealth government is looking at ways to address it. It has proposed a product stewardship program for tyres. That would involve a \$5 levy that would be collected by a national industry association. These funds would then be paid to tyre recyclers according to how many tyres they have recycled. There is also a state government proposal, as the member would be aware. The member has made a submission on that proposal. The member is also chairing a committee on a wider issue to deal with extended producer responsibility and container deposit legislation. We support the proposed commonwealth scheme, which is due for introduction in the middle of next year, to deal with this massive problem. It is unlikely it would require much financial contribution from the state government. We expect that the industry association would finance the operation of the scheme from funds raised through the levy proposed to be implemented by the commonwealth. Any additional funding could be met through the management fund provided by the landfill levy, if that was necessary. We expect the national levy will be in place in 2007-08. The disposal of used tyres is a massive problem. We are confronting that problem everywhere, with all types of waste. It is not as sexy as other areas of environmental protection, but it is a big problem. I have some photographs of stacks of used tyres. They have to go somewhere. People have to deal with them. However, this is one good way of putting a value on them to ensure that this problem is dealt with.

[3.30 pm]

**Mr J.N. HYDE:** Is the federal government going to make this a compulsory levy or is it going to wimp out as it has with plastic bags?

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** I will ask Mr Michael Kerr to answer.

**Mr M. Kerr:** As far as I am aware, it will be a compulsory levy. There will be a regulatory regime underpinning it to ensure that all the players come into the scheme.

**Mr J.N. HYDE:** Will the levy be based on the weight, size or value of tyres? I am aware that the mining industry uses tyres that cost \$35 000 new. Will the levy be pro rata on the value of tyres or just \$5 a tyre? Is that level of detail available?

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** As I understand it, it will be \$5 a tyre. However, the member raises a good point. It is a commonwealth program so I am not exactly sure. We will watch it as it develops. We will be quite supportive of it.

**Mr M.W. TRENORDEN:** The mining industry is digging up old tyres and reusing them because it cannot get new tyres.

**Mr J.N. HYDE:** I declare my financial interest in the rubber industry!

**Ms J.A. RADISICH:** I refer to the seventh dot point under "Major Achievements For 2005-06" at page 856. The state government has negotiated and entered into sustainability partnership agreements with some local government authorities. I am aware of the agreement with the City of Swan. I was of the understanding that there are also agreements with Maddington and Kenwick. I am keen to obtain the minister's view of how the sustainability partnerships are going, what difference they are making and whether the minister's department is interested in contributing any funding other than the in-kind contribution that is already being made towards the partnerships.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** I will defer to Mr Sippe to answer the question in a moment. The new department that will come into operation on 1 July will have a significant greenhouse and sustainability division to deal with all these issues and to put serious policy muscle behind this issue. That is one good outcome. The government still remains committed to sustainability outcomes. It will make sure that it has sufficient administrative backup to achieve more than it has in the past. Mr Sippe will talk about the sustainability partnership agreements.

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**Mr R.A.D. Sippe:** Responsibility for the sustainability agreements was recently transferred from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet to the Department of Environment. We have looked at the success of sustainability partnership agreements in the short term because the responsibility has just only come to us. We think that they are extremely successful. We are looking at operationalising - to use a horrible word - sustainability to get some practical outcomes on the ground. In particular, the agreement with the City of Swan has been a benchmark. A lot of personal effort was put into the agreement by all parties. We probably see it as one of the leading lights, particularly in guiding new urban developments on a sustainable basis and in ensuring sustainability along the extent of the urban front.

**Ms J.A. RADISICH:** When the sustainability agreements were under the control of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, no staff allocation was given to the City of Swan agreement. I cannot speak for any of the other agreements. Could that be considered an appropriate resource allocation for the minister's department to make, given that it now has this responsibility and given the good work that is being undertaken and delivered as a result of the sustainability agreements?

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** The member is an excellent advocate for her electorate. I will look very closely at boosting resources for this arrangement in her electorate. We will have additional resources to do so. Four full-time equivalent positions have been transferred from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet to deal with these issues. I expect that the area dealing with the agreements will be increased in the new department that comes into effect on 1 July.

**Dr S.C. THOMAS:** I refer to the fourth dot point at page 846, which deals with climate change and greenhouse gas emissions. That point also relates to the dot point at page 856, which refers to the draft state of the environment report, and which is regarded as a major achievement for 2005-06.

The minister probably has far more accurate and more recent statistics for Western Australia's greenhouse gas emissions. Can the minister tell me whether greenhouse gas emissions have reduced? That would have been our obligations had we signed the Kyoto Protocol. Have they been maintained at 108 per cent of emissions, which was the target of the federal government, as an alternative to the Kyoto Protocol? Have the levels gone beyond that?

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** It is an interesting question. I noted in a newspaper the other day that the commonwealth claimed that emissions had not grown very much.

**Dr S.C. THOMAS:** The commonwealth claims that, Australia-wide, it will meet the 108 per cent level.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Yes. It is claiming that. It is difficult for me to understand how the commonwealth can claim that because we do not have a regime in place to work out exactly what the emissions are from individual industries so that we can get exact figures on what is being produced. That is an area we will have to look at so that we can get from industries data about what is produced. At the moment the only way it can be worked out is through a ballpark figure. I expect that we have exceeded our 108 per cent target, which the member referred to. I cannot give an exact answer on that at the moment. However, we can look at other ways of obtaining the information.

There is no doubt that this is a significant issue. I regard greenhouse gas emissions as the number one environmental issue in the world, as I believe most people do. Some people deny it and some people acknowledge its existence but do not want to do anything about it. It is a vexed question. It is a great pity that we do not have a uniform approach across Australia to deal with this issue, particularly with cooperation from the commonwealth. Our view is that we should have signed the Kyoto Protocol. I suspect from the tone of the member's question that he thinks we should not have signed. Although Kyoto is flawed, it is the first effort and the only game in town that is trying to deal with this issue on a world scale. The federal environment minister acknowledges the problem; he says that it is true and that the greenhouse problem is a fact and so forth. However, he does not appear to want to do anything about it. That is the problem.

**Dr S.C. THOMAS:** I did not make any comment about my position on the Kyoto Protocol at all. I believe that the minister said that he will supply some supplementary information on the latest levels of greenhouse gas emissions. Is that accurate? I saw some heads nodding. It might have been an advisory head nodding and not a ministerial head nodding.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** I am not sure exactly what information I can provide to the member. As I said, it is very difficult to determine, which is one of the issues. It is hard to determine an inventory of what is being produced so that we can work out where we are at any point in time. We have some ballpark figures about current emissions and I am happy to get them to the member by way of supplementary information.

*[Supplementary Information No A65.]*

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[3.40 pm]

**Dr S.C. THOMAS:** This is the same further question. Do not knock me down again, Mr Chairman! The minister said that he thinks that Western Australia, and Australia in particular, should have been a signatory to the Kyoto Protocol. If, as is most likely, Western Australia has not met its requirements under the federal government's 108 per cent proposal, it would be 10 times further away from meeting its requirements under the Kyoto Protocol. Is the government on the one hand supporting a philosophical ideological position and on the other hand providing absolutely nothing practical to enable Western Australia to meet those same requirements?

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** The government is doing a range of things. I will outline what we have done in the budget. The member will note that we have allocated an amount for a specific greenhouse unit in the Department of Environment to deal with these issues. Some serious money has been allocated to put together the technical expertise that is needed. People are needed who have knowledge of, and experience in, putting together an emissions trading regime. We need that type of experience so that we can at least participate in the national debate on this issue. Currently we do not have that expertise. We need to work out our greenhouse gas inventory. We must determine what our actual emissions are so that we can plan for the future and participate in the national approach. We have allocated \$2 million in the budget to put those resources in place. The different areas involved include mitigation and abatement. The member will note that the government has provided significant amounts of money - \$30 million or \$40 million - to continue the process of converting the state government's bus fleet to gas. The government provides sufficient offsets to cater for each government vehicle. It is government policy to buy a certain amount of its electricity from renewable suppliers. We have instituted and put in place, with the belated support of the opposition, the new disaggregated electricity market. The biggest difficulty facing renewable energy suppliers who wanted to get into the electricity market was the single integrated entity that existed previously. The new system will assist renewable suppliers and make it easier for them to enter the electricity market. They are very happy about that. Efforts are ongoing to put in place a basic system that will assist in reducing energy consumption and other components of individual household consumption. That will be good when it comes into effect. TravelSmart has been designed to convert people from driving their vehicles to catching public transport. The southern railway line is another initiative.

**Mr M.W. TRENORDEN:** The desalination plant.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** The desalination plant.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Minister, the answer to the question has gone on for a while. Please tie it up.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Another aspect that I have not mentioned is the wind farm regime to offset greenhouse gases. It will increase the price of the desalination plant, but it will offset greenhouse gases - a great example for everyone else! We are doing some things, but there is no doubt that we must do more. The commonwealth government in particular must do more. The furphy that it is planning to put nuclear power stations in the middle of Perth is not only -

**Mr J. McGRATH:** That is ridiculous.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** It is not quite in the member for South Perth's electorate, but it is just across the freeway from his electorate. I would not expect the member to support that idea, even if it is not in his electorate.

**Mr J.N. HYDE:** I am about to ask the minister a question on that.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** I look forward to being asked that question.

**Mr J.N. HYDE:** I refer to service 2, "Regulation of Discharges to the Environment", on page 850. The third dot point under "Major Achievements For 2005-06" refers to the controlled waste regulations. I would like the minister to provide some information on this matter, because I am alarmed. The reason for my alarm is that a couple of federal members, Dennis "Judas" Jenson and Senator Ian "Chernobyl" Campbell, have been talking about locating nuclear reactors in Western Australia. "Judas" Jenson's electorate contains a lot of southern suburbs and "Chernobyl" Campbell's electorate includes the electorates of the members for Swan Hills, South Perth and Perth. Will boutique nuclear reactors be popping up along the Swan River? Is the minister a convert to that cause, or will these regulations help to keep Western Australia green?

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** The controlled waste tracking system was developed by the Department of Environment. It allows for a sophisticated global positioning system to track toxic and hazardous waste as it travels around the state, allowing us to know where it is at any time. The people in DoE deserve our thanks and congratulations, because that system has been bought by other countries. The environmental regulators in New Zealand have bought the system to track waste around New Zealand. We can develop these types of systems in Western Australia and provide another income stream for our environmental agencies.

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We do not support the establishment of nuclear reactors in Perth. Today Dennis Jensen, the federal member for Tangney, indicated that he has no difficulty with having a nuclear reactor located in his electorate. It is easy for him to say it should be in his electorate when, as I understand it, he lives in Halls Head. His electorate is 50 kilometres from where he lives.

**Mr M.W. TRENORDEN:** I would not go picking on where members live.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** It is easy to say that a nuclear reactor should be located where one does not live. The federal Minister for the Environment and Heritage - this is undeniable - has said that a nuclear reactor should be located in Western Australia. The member for O'Connor - the member for Avon's good friend - has indicated that he has no difficulty in establishing a nuclear waste dump in Western Australia. He has said, "Bring it on". The Liberal Party supports uranium mining. It supports uranium mining, a nuclear waste repository and a nuclear reactor. The only thing the Liberal Party has not said it supports thus far is nuclear weapons. Who knows where the debate will be next week. By next week nuclear weapons could be based here as part of our defence forces. That is where we are at regarding Senator Campbell and Dennis Jensen, the federal member for Tangney. It would take only one more trip to America for the Prime Minister to come back and say that we need nuclear weapons in Australia. That is the way the debate is currently developing.

**Mr M.W. TRENORDEN:** I refer to output 5, "Policies and Strategies to Reduce and Recycle Waste". The first dot point under "Major Achievements For 2005-06" on page 854 refers to a public announcement of eight possible sites for hazardous waste precincts for waste treatment. The minister is aware - I do not expect a comment on this part of my question - that in Avon the process that has been undertaken by the core consultative committee on waste has been an abject disaster. It is the worst I have ever seen. What time table has been set for that CCC process? I imagine that the consultation process is now finished. When will the minister receive information, and when can we expect some reaction from those reports?

[3.50 pm]

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** I thank the member for the question. I know this issue is of genuine concern to the member for Avon. When I was in his electorate for the cabinet meeting, they sang me a song about it, which was quite interesting.

**Mr M.W. TRENORDEN:** It has been very bad.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** The member for Leschenault has also expressed concern about waste going into his electorate. I expect that any member who represents a particular area will have some concerns -

**Mr M.W. TRENORDEN:** My argument is not that we should not have a site in Avon. My argument is about the process, whereby the only place in Avon we could talk about was the Avon industrial park. The rest of Avon was not allowed to be examined. It was a very poor process.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** As the member will be aware, we called in people from the Contaminated Sites Alliance and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia to try to work out a process of which everyone could be a part. I understand that the process will conclude shortly. Three sites will be recommended to cabinet in August 2006 - one in the north west, one in the goldfields and one in the south west. It will then be up to cabinet to decide what to do in relation to that. There are funds in next year's budget for executive support, operational sitting fees, coordinating precinct development, waste management guideline development and multi-agency training for waste facility regulation and emergency response. There are also funds to develop new legislation that defines precincts, protects their buffers from encroachment by sensitive land users, and defines which wastes are hazardous and where they should be treated. None of the money in the budget includes the cost of establishing or operating a precinct, or the cost of relocating existing enterprises into a precinct. It will come to cabinet in August.

**Mr M.W. TRENORDEN:** I presume that the process is that the reports will be written. Will they be presented to the minister and will he then put them to cabinet? Is that the process?

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Yes, as I understand it. That will be in August, and cabinet will make a decision sometime after that.

**Mr M.W. TRENORDEN:** When does the minister expect to receive those reports?

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Probably in July. I think this process has gone right as it has gone along. It has taken longer. Naturally, the people involved in the core consultative committee have been concerned to try to win over communities to be part of it, and some communities are not very happy.

**Mr M.W. TRENORDEN:** They could win over Avon if they work for another hundred years.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Will the member still be the member for Avon then?

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**Mr M.W. TRENORDEN:** Yes, definitely.

**Mr J. McGRATH:** And still shopping at Coles!

**Mr M.W. TRENORDEN:** Yes, and still shopping at Coles; that is right.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** I refer to page 846. The second dot point under the heading “Clearing of Native Vegetation Regulations”, which is one of the items listed under “Significant Issues and Trends”, refers to permits for clearing. This is a topical issue within the Shire of Collie. As the minister will know, the Shire of Collie is in a water catchment zone. I am talking not about farm land, but about household blocks. An assessment is done and trees have to be replanted in a like zone. Unfortunately, there are not enough areas in which to replant the trees that are cleared from blocks. There is only a small zone within the Collie town site. There is an A and B zone, but in the A zone trees must be planted in a smaller area. This is limiting the growth of Collie. Is Collie the only place in which this activity is being enforced?

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** It may well be the local council that is doing that.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** No, it is the Department of Environment.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** I will have to get the member some further information.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** It is causing huge problems for development in Collie. The planting of trees is a great thing. However, when the minister looks at the issue, can it possibly be extended not to a like zone?

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** I will take account of what the member has said. A process is under way to review the native vegetation clearing regulations, and the Office of Development Approvals Coordination is coordinating that. Perhaps we can have a chat about that later.

**Mr J.N. HYDE:** I refer to page 849 and service 1, “Air Quality Management Plans and Air Quality Monitoring”. The fifth dot point under “Major Achievements For 2005-06” refers to a review of wood heater regulations.

**Mr J. McGRATH:** No-one uses them anymore.

**Mr J.N. HYDE:** I have two wood heaters in my Perth home and two in my Denmark dwelling. I am aware that many other people in the inner city have them as well. What initiatives has the government undertaken to provide for some of those people who may not be able to afford any other heating in winter?

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** It is a problem. In some areas, if people go outside at night, particularly when there is a temperature inversion, they will find that the air is quite difficult to breathe when the wood heaters are going at full bore. They are the largest single source of particles contributing to haze formation. We have in place regulations that are designed to control the sale of new wood heaters in the market and to outlaw the burning of green wood in fires. The buyback scheme has worked very well. There has been a pilot project in Joondalup, Melville and Kwinana, with a \$600 financial subsidy for the replacement of old wood heaters with cleaner forms of heating, such as flued or ducted gas heaters. It was well patronised. The wood heaters that were returned have not been resold; they have been destroyed, because we want people to get properly flued heaters as part of the process. That has been the process so far.

**The appropriation was recommended.**

*Meeting suspended from 3.56 to 4.00 pm*