

LAKE KEPWARI RECREATION FACILITY, COLLIE — OPENING

2137. Mr M.P. Murray to the Minister for Regional Development

Referring to the Lake Kepwari recreation facility east of Collie, I ask:

- (a) is the Minister aware the opening of this facility is two years overdue and that in June the Minister predicted the opening to occur in January 2010;
- (b) has this opening occurred; and
 - (i) if not, why not and when will it occur;
- (c) is the Minister aware that all work conducted on the facility by the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) has been abandoned during the fire season for a second year;
- (d) is the minister aware that DEC cites a lack of staff as the reason for the cessation of work on Lake Kepwari during the fire season;
- (e) is the Minister aware that vital tourist dollars are being lost to the South West economy because work by DEC has been suspended on Lake Kepwari; and
- (f) what actions will the Minister take to ensure this facility opens as soon as possible?

Mr B.J. GRYLLS replied:

- (a) I visited Lake Kepwari in July 2009. At that time it appeared that the abandonment would be shortly completed and potentially opened in early 2010.
- (b) No
 - (i) The abandonment of the mining lease has not yet occurred. This was complicated by a number of issues, including Wesfarmers Premier Coal wanting the State to fully indemnify the company from any future safety issues. This required the Department for Mines and Petroleum (DMP) plus the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) to identify and address all safety issues with Wesfarmers Premier Coal, prior to abandonment.
- (c) Work has continued in order to meet agreement between DEC and Wesfarmers Premier Coal on the safety issues identified by DEC and DMP.
- (d) The key DEC staff member involved in this process is the District Manager who has a key role in bush fire coordination. However, he has continued to attend meetings with Premier Coal and the South West Development Commission to finalise the abandonment.

The South West Development Commission funded a 3 month period in mid-2009, to free up this manager to concentrate on the abandonment process.
- (e) Work has not been suspended on Lake Kepwari. The only work possible is the abandonment process as a precursor to letting tenders for the lake recreation infrastructure development.
- (f) It is anticipated that, subject to the agreement of the Department for State Development, that the work could be tendered and commenced in the next 2 months.