

BUSHFIRE SUPPRESSION — SAWYERS VALLEY

**56. Hon RICK MAZZA to the Minister for Environment:**

I refer to the bushfires around Sawyers Valley and Mundaring Weir in January this year.

- (1) Can the minister advise the costs of aerial water-bombing for this event?
- (2) From which department or agency did these costs come?
- (3) Has an analysis been undertaken of the effectiveness of water-bombing to control this fire?
- (4) If no to (3), will an analysis be undertaken?
- (5) If yes to (3), what was the outcome of the analysis?
- (6) Will the analysis be made public?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:**

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (1) The combined cost of aerial water-bombing operations by Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions and Department of Fire and Emergency Services contractors for the Chamber Road, Sawyers Valley fire in January 2018 was \$394 857, including fuel and retardants.
- (2) As the controlling agency for the fire, the DBCA is responsible for all water-bombing costs.
- (3)–(6) The analysis of water-bombing effectiveness for specific fires is not undertaken routinely and was not conducted for this fire. A review of water-bomber operations at an individual bushfire event would normally be conducted only in response to a specific operational incident. At the end of a bushfire season, overall operations are reviewed as good practice to ensure they are safe and efficient. This does not focus on the efficiency of each water drop or effectiveness of each operation due to the substantial number of variables involved in bushfire suppression.

In the instance of the Chamber Road fire, water-bombers provided routine assistance to ground crews in an initial attack and ongoing incident response. Of note was the rescue of a lone walker from a Bibbulmun Track hut by an aerial-attack helicopter.