

ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE ACT —  
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AUTHORITY GUIDANCE

**548. Ms L. METTAM to the Minister for Environment:**

I refer to the Environmental Protection Agency's release in June of the *Interim technical guidance environmental impact assessment of social surroundings—Aboriginal cultural heritage* in readiness of the commencement of Labor's Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2021 on 1 July 2023, to work alongside the new laws.

- (1) Given the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2021 is being repealed, can the minister confirm the EPA's approach has been updated to reflect the Cook Labor government's repeal bill changes?
- (2) Will these technical guidelines be updated publicly to reflect the Cook Labor government's repeal bill changes?
- (3) Can the minister provide industry with certainty that there will be no duplications?

**The SPEAKER:** Just before I give the minister the call, that was an exceedingly long question, so I would caution you to try to make the questions a little briefer or have fewer parts.

**Mr R.R. WHITBY replied:**

- (1)–(3) I thank the Leader of the Liberal Party, and I thank her for her concise and direct question there—fantastic effort! The cultural heritage legislation obviously sits with a colleague of mine, another minister. The Environmental Protection Authority has a role under its act to consider social surround issues. In its history it has always considered Aboriginal cultural heritage to fit in that parameter and it will continue to do so. As the member probably knows, the EPA is a statutory independent body, with a chair and board, that considers and always acts according to its legislative obligations under the act. It will continue to consider social surround issues, which may from time to time include Aboriginal cultural issues as appropriate. It will continue to behave in that way.