

CARNAC ISLAND, STUDY

15. Hon J.A. SCOTT to the Minister for Housing representing the Minister for the Environment and Heritage:

In relation to the study that the Department of Conservation and Land Management is carrying out at Carnac Island into the impact of visitors on the island -

- (1) How much money has been set aside for the study?
- (2) What officers are conducting the study?
- (3) What environmental impacts are being assessed?
- (4) Can the minister outline the methodology of the study?

Hon TOM STEPHENS replied:

- (1) A report has been written on the potential for visitor impact on the sea lion population of Carnac Island which is reserved for the purpose of conservation of flora and fauna and recreation. The report uses data collected by CALM field staff, commercial operators and from independent scientific studies to draw conclusions about possible impacts on seal lion populations. The report was prepared as part of normal operational activities and has not been costed separately.
- (2) Information/data for the report has been collected by numerous CALM field staff since the early 1980s. The report has been coordinated and written by Mr Colin Ingram.
- (3) The potential impacts of commercial and recreational visitation on sea lion populations at Carnac Island.
- (4) Sea lion numbers recorded for Carnac Island since 1987 have been compared with recreational and commercial visitation figures for the island. Conclusions have been drawn based on interpretation of the data. Trends in sea lion population fluctuations for Carnac Island have been compared with adjacent islands where sea lions frequent but where human visitation does not occur.