

MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, HERITAGE AND THE ARTS

(Senate Question No. 398)

Senator Siewert asked the Minister representing the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts, upon notice, on 7 April 2008: With reference to an answer provided by the Western Australian Parliamentary Secretary representing the Minister for the Environment in the Western Australian Legislative Council, the Honourable Sally Talbot MLC, to question on notice no. 5913 (Western Australian Legislative Council *Hansard*, 18 March 2008, p 1034b) and records of determinations made by the Western Australian Environmental Protection Authority, available on the authority's website at www.epa.wa.gov.au/docs/2641_ChairDets140108.pdf, and given that Western Australian mining leases M47/112, M47/29 and M47/326, two of which straddle the national heritage listed area of the Dampier Archipelago (including the Burrup Peninsula), have been given environmental approval by the Western Australian Government without any environmental assessment or advice:

- (1) Was the department informed of the mining applications within the national heritage listed area: (a) if so: (i) on what date, and (ii) what action or evaluation was carried out by the department in respect of the application; or (b) if not: (i) does the Minister intend to find out why not, and/or (ii) what action does the Minister intend to take.
- (2) Does the Minister support mining activity in, or adjacent to, the area; if so, why.

Senator Wong – The Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts has provided the following answer to the honourable senator's question:

- (1) The department was not informed of the mining applications referred to by the honourable senator. I have asked the department to look into the matter.
- (2) The National Heritage values of the Dampier Archipelago (including the Burrup Peninsula) are recognised and protected under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. In accordance with my obligations under that Act, I would only approve an action referred to me after carefully considering whether it would have, or be likely to have, a significant impact on the National Heritage values of the National Heritage place.