

**Question on Notice
No. 925
Asked on 7 June 2007**

QUESTION:

MR HORAN asked the Minister for Environment and Multiculturalism (Ms Nelson-Carr)—

With reference to page 4 of the Review of the Roles and Responsibilities of Natural Resources Minerals and Water, Environmental Protection Agency and Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries which refers to ‘delays being experienced in obtaining approvals for amendments to Regional Ecosystems maps, and in getting Property Maps of Assessable Vegetation (PMAVs) approved’—

Will she provide the (a) number of applications received for amendments to Regional Ecosystems maps, including a breakdown by local government area, (b) number of applications for amendments to Regional Ecosystem maps that have been approved to date, including a breakdown by local government area, (c) average time that it has taken to process applications, the average time of approval and a breakdown of the average time of approval by local government area and (d) longest time taken for a PMAV approval and the longest time taken for approval of amendments to Regional Ecosystem maps?

ANSWER:

The EPA is responsible for maintaining the regional ecosystem maps, working with the Department of Natural Resources and Water (DNRW), consultants and the public on map modification assessments and implementation. DNRW is responsible for the Property Maps of Assessable Vegetation (PMAV) assessments. While DNRW does involve the EPA in some regional ecosystem map modification assessments associated with PMAVs, most PMAVs are not referred to the EPA.

In response to Parts (a) and (b) of your question, there have been 3,054 applications received and processed for regional ecosystem map assessment requests between January 2000 and 19 June 2007. A further 40 map assessment requests are currently being processed as at 19 June 2007. The breakdown by Local Government Area for regional ecosystem map assessment requests is provided in the table below.

In response to Parts (c) and (d) of your question, the average time for processing regional ecosystem map requests was 54 days, the median time 28 days and the longest time was 600 days (including weekends and public holidays). Note the longest time request was not for tree clearing, vegetation management but was for improving the accuracy of the mapped remnant vegetation of the property. The graph provided below shows that over 80% of regional ecosystem requests are processed within 100 days.

The process to amend the regional ecosystem mapping initially involves a desktop analysis using resources such as historical aerial photographs, multi-age satellite imagery, geology and soil maps. However field data, such the height and species of trees and shrubs present, is often required to make an accurate decision on the remnant status of the vegetation. In addition, clients are required to provide adequate information to allow an assessment to occur.

Some Map Assessment requests have taken longer to finalise for a number of reasons:

- Insufficient information was provided by clients to justify the map changes requested in the first instance. Delays in clients' responses to the EPA's follow-up requests were lengthy. Procedures have now been instigated whereby these types of requests are handled more efficiently during the assessment process.
- Some of the Map Assessment Requests were associated with Department Natural Resources and Water Compliance and Appeals cases. Finalisation of these cases is dependent on court or tribunal proceedings, which took significant time-periods to complete.
- Some delays were associated with both the Request Vetting System and Priority System instigated by the Herbarium in dealing with Map Assessment Requests. Priority was given to Ministerial issues (both Environment and Natural Resources and Water), mining requests, Vegetation Management Act tree clearing requests, ballot requests, and fodder and forest practice requests. Other requests may have been subsequently delayed due to this prioritisation.

Table: The breakdown by Local Government Area for regional ecosystem map assessment requests.

LGA	Number of RE Map Assessments Processed	Longest time (days including weekends and public holidays) for completion	Average time (days including weekends and public holidays) taken for completion
ARAMAC	22	224	67.4
ATHERTON	19	54	25.1
BALONNE	103	455	61.6
BANANA	47	384	57.4
BARCALDINE	16	149	24.0
BARCOO	7	76	27.9
BAUHINIA	36	537	87.1
BEAUDESERT	43	372	33.1
BELYANDO	51	415	89.1
BENDEMERE	23	245	61.1
BIGGENDEN	22	131	22.6
BLACKALL	19	148	60.9
BOONAH	13	69	21.7
BOORINGA	66	310	46.5
BOWEN	18	200	42.4
BRISBANE	25	137	39.1
BROADSOUND	79	213	46.5
BUNDABERG	1	8	8.0
BUNGIL	51	284	67.1
BURDEKIN	9	161	45.6
BURNETT	51	179	28.8
CABOOLTURE	55	175	46.2
CAIRNS	17	171	41.9
CALLIOPE	57	314	82.5
CALOUNDRA	27	95	27.6
CAMBOOYA	9	241	32.3
CARDWELL	18	158	40.8
CHINCHILLA	85	355	62.9
CLIFTON	18	259	77.1
CLONCURRY	1	53	53.0
COOK	8	97	32.8
COOLOOLA	43	180	34.2
CROWS NEST	32	143	32.2
DALRYMPLE	38	90	37.3
DOUGLAS	7	95	38.4
DUARINGA	52	394	85.0
EACHAM	5	89	38.3
EIDSVOLD	22	600	85.1
EMERALD	36	372	67.5
ESK	33	241	37.2
ETHERIDGE	1	13	13.0
FITZROY	45	460	127.5
FLINDERS	14	200	84.5
GATTON	17	94	38.0

GAYNDAH	20	359	135.0
GLADSTONE	5	174	92.4
GOLD COAST	16	151	26.1
GOONDIWINDI	1	42	42.0
HERBERTON	7	64	20.4
HERVEY BAY	20	95	25.2
HINCHINBROOK	15	81	22.9
ILFRACOMBE	3	28	7.3
INGLEWOOD	32	394	74.5
IPSWICH	25	170	35.8
ISIS	42	339	57.4
ISISFORD	16	167	34.0
JERICO	30	285	77.4
JOHNSTONE	14	82	33.1
JONDARYAN	6	234	60.2
KILCOY	4	178	49.7
KILKIVAN	23	190	30.9
KINGAROY	20	193	52.8
KOLAN	25	178	78.1
LAIDLEY	9	96	20.6
LIVINGSTONE	94	259	69.3
LOGAN	40	203	29.5
LONGREACH	21	292	118.7
MACKAY	61	172	34.2
MAREEBA	19	120	35.0
MAROOCHY	42	197	47.6
MARYBOROUGH	13	133	33.9
MILES	1	10	10.0
MILLMERRAN	13	230	120.4
MIRANI	19	107	36.9
MIRIAM VALE	76	402	49.7
MONTO	19	155	62.3
MOUNT MORGAN	3	78	60.7
MUNDUBBERA	23	371	148.2
MURGON	4	37	13.0
MURILLA	42	297	79.4
MURWEH	60	275	50.7
NANANGO	13	68	23.2
NEBO	40	174	40.6
NOOSA	25	261	25.9
PAROO	27	140	79.2
PEAK DOWNS	45	332	86.8
PERRY	19	99	50.3
PINE RIVERS	19	131	35.2
PITTSWORTH	2	90	70.3
QUILPIE	5	84	47.9
REDCLIFFE	7	101	37.9
REDLAND	14	65	19.1
RICHMOND	7	82	52.2
ROMA	1	16	16.0

ROSALIE	44	196	51.4
SARINA	45	166	39.4
STANTHORPE	26	299	62.9
TAMBO	13	70	30.9
TARA	42	351	113.1
TAROOM	24	162	45.1
THURINGOWA	9	107	45.9
TIARO	33	275	62.4
TOOWOOMBA	4	63	30.1
TOWNSVILLE	7	49	33.6
WAGGAMBA	11	221	41.4
WAMBO	32	319	86.6
WARROO	77	312	58.5
WARWICK	53	344	80.0
WHITSUNDAY	19	116	27.8
WINTON	4	112	38.5
WONDAI	26	231	39.2
WOOCOO	24	116	29.9
YARRABAH	1	14	14.0

Completion Time for Map Assessment Requests (2000 - 2007)

