

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 130

asked on Thursday, 16 February 2017

MR R WILLIAMS ASKED THE MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE PROTECTION AND MINISTER FOR NATIONAL PARKS AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF (HON DR S MILES)—

QUESTION:

Will the Minister advise what the government is doing to protect endangered nesting and hatching turtles on Ocean Beach, Bribie Island?

ANSWER:

Most of Ocean Beach on Bribie Island above high water mark lies within the Bribie Island Recreation Area and Bribie Island National Park. This area is managed by the Department of National Parks Sport and Racing (the department) under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* and *Recreation Areas Management Act 2006*.

The Bribie Island Recreation Area is a popular recreational destination which is experiencing an increasing number of visitors, many of whom are using four wheel drive vehicles to access Ocean Beach. The department issues Vehicle Access Permits to manage access and impacts of four wheel drive vehicles on Ocean Beach as inappropriate use of vehicles in this area, particularly on vegetated dunes, can cause environmental damage and threaten turtle nests and hatching turtles.

The department is committed to making visitors aware of what is considered appropriate conduct and their responsibilities while operating vehicles off-road and on beaches. Information on appropriate conduct and driver responsibilities is available: on the department's website; through camping and booking agents; at visitor information stations; at park entrances; and in printed brochures. Regulatory signs are also used and installed to warn visitors to not drive on vegetated dunes. Rangers also undertake regular compliance patrols to ensure visitors are adhering to permit conditions.

In response to the Member's advocacy, work is now underway to improve signage drawing visitors' attention to the presence of endangered turtles nesting and hatching. The department is working with the Moreton Bay Regional Council and other stakeholders to achieve this outcome as well as improve overall visitor communication. The new signage warning drivers of potential turtle nests in the upper beach and dune areas is currently under development with production and installation to occur prior to next turtle season.