

Question on Notice

No. 1496

Tuesday, 9 December 2025

HON L LINARD ASKED MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND TOURISM AND MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND INNOVATION (HON A POWELL)—

QUESTION:

With reference to Traditional Owners and Conservation Groups having publicly raised opposition to the recent removal of an iconic crocodile (known as ‘Old Faithful’) from Rinyirru National Park, and the subsequent relocation of the named estuarine crocodile to Australia Zoo—

Will the Minister (a) provide a Statement of Reasons as to why the crocodile was removed from Rinyirru National Park as requested by Traditional Owners, (b) explain why the request from Traditional Owners to consider a return of Old Faithful to Country was not considered and (c) explain why Traditional Owners were not consulted at any point or made aware prior to the transfer of Old Faithful from Far North Queensland to Australia Zoo, on the Sunshine Coast?

ANSWER:

I am advised of the following:

- (a) The process to apply for a statement of reasons is as follows: the request must be in writing from a person aggrieved by a decision: submitted within 28 days of receiving the decision document, or within a "reasonable time" if the decision was not provided in writing; addressed to the individual who made the decision, or to the relevant Minister if the decision was made by the Governor in Council or Cabinet; and it must clearly identify the decision for which reasons are being sought.
- (b) The request from Traditional Owners to consider returning the large crocodile to Country was carefully considered. However, due to the threat the crocodile would pose to human safety and wellbeing remaining unchanged, there was no basis for revoking the ‘problem crocodile’ declaration decision and returning the animal to the Normanby River.
- (c) Relevant Traditional Owners were consulted before the crocodile was removed from Rinyirru (Lakefield) National Park and also given the opportunity to provide input on placement options for the crocodile but chose not to respond.