

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee
Answers to questions on notice
Environment portfolio

Question No: 14
Hearing: Additional Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 1
Programme: Wildlife Heritage and Marine Division (WHM)
Topic: Tasmanian Wilderness Heritage Area - Draft management plan
Hansard Page: 112
Question Date: 08 February 2016
Question Type: Spoken

Senator McKim asked:

Senator McKIM: Is the department concerned that, in its draft management plan for the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area, the Tasmanian government has removed references to the need to maintain a rapid response capacity to fight fires, it has removed references to the need for continuing research on the impacts of fire in the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area and it has removed references to the need for monitoring of effectiveness of fire strategies in the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area? Does that concern the department?

Mr Oxley: I am not in a position to express concern or otherwise on behalf of the department because I am not aware of the specific reference that you are making. I will, if I may, take that one on notice, please.

Senator McKIM: That is fine, but we did actually discuss that draft management plan at the previous estimates hearing, from memory.

Mr Oxley: I understand that, and I am saying to you: it is a large document and I am not across all of the detail of it, as you would appreciate.

Senator McKIM: All right. That is fair enough. ...

Answer:

The management plan for the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area may reference other legislation, policies and plans to give effect to aspects of management. This is the approach taken in relation to fire by the Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service in drafting the plan.

The draft plan links directly to the Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service's Fire Management Policy, Fire Planning Policy and Regional Strategic Fire Management Plans – the principal guidance documents for fire management in Tasmanian parks. This approach will enable an up-to-date and adaptive approach to fire management in the Tasmanian Wilderness.

The draft plan is complemented by the *Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area, Research and Monitoring Priorities 2013-2018* (Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and the Environment, 2013) which establishes a framework for scientific research in the Tasmanian Wilderness and includes a key objective to “enhance knowledge of the ecological role of fire in the Tasmanian Wilderness to improve fire management practices”. This document is available on line at <http://dpiwwe.tas.gov.au/conservation/publications-forms-and-permits/publications/twwha-research-monitoring-priorities-2013-2018>.