

MEDIA STATEMENT



Media Contact: Jo Large

Mobile: 0450 965 401

Email: jo.large@audit.wa.gov.au

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AUDITOR GENERAL RELEASES OPINIONS ON THREE MINISTERIAL NOTIFICATIONS

Mr Murphy also tabled a report in Parliament today, relating to his opinions on separate decisions from the Minister for Environment, Minister for Forestry and Minister for Planning not to provide information to Parliament.

Under legislation, the Auditor General is required to express an opinion as to whether it is reasonable and appropriate for a Minister not to provide information to Parliament.

Mr Murphy said that all agencies could learn from the examples in the report, as they contained important lessons about how to document consideration of decision making on what constitutes commercially sensitive information and legal professional privilege.

“It was disappointing to see that in all three cases, the agencies’ advice to their Minister was not supported by thorough, documented assessment of relevant issues to support the recommendation.”

“As a result of this, in only one of the instances was I able to form an opinion that the Minister’s decision was reasonable and appropriate.”

The report deals with the following three Ministerial decisions:

- Minister Jacob in his role as Minister for Environment, relating to information on legal advice sought in relation to the Margaret River bushfires in 2011
- Minister Redman in his role as Minister for Forestry, relating to information on contracts of sale with the Forest Products Commission
- Minister Day in his role as Minister for Planning, relating to information on outcomes of a tender for a public relations services contract for Whiteman Park.

“My previous reports have outlined the key principles and criteria to follow when providing advice to their Minister, and I would encourage all agencies to review and apply these before giving such advice.”

The Auditor General’s reports ‘*Audit Results Report: Annual 2012-13 Assurance Audits*’ (Report 15 – November 2013) and ‘*Opinions on Ministerial Notifications*’ (Report 16 – November 2013) can be downloaded from the Office of the Auditor General website at www.audit.wa.gov.au

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