



Katy Gallagher MLA

CHIEF MINISTER

Establishment of a single conservation agency

On 1 July this year the Assembly resolved, among other things, that I should “consider the establishment of a single conservation agency and report to the Assembly by the last day of sittings in 2014 on my deliberations”.

[Responding remarks].

The timing and substance of administrative changes are, of course, at the discretion of the Chief Minister of the day. The Chief Minister determines through administrative arrangements the best arrangements to ensure quality service provision to the people of the ACT and surrounding regions.

I did indicate however when this matter was last discussed in this place, that I would update the Assembly by the last day of sitting on my deliberations with respect to Parliamentary Agreement item 3.12.

As I have said previously, a single conservation agency would only be established when I am convinced that it will improve service to the community, enhance protection for the environment, and demonstrate that the administrative systems in place efficiently support delivery of outcomes for the staff and for the executive and through them the community of the ACT.

I have discussed this at length with Ministers currently responsible for the functions that would be included in a single conservation agency. I have also considered the views of the Director General's and the Head of Service.

As part of the recent introduction of a sixth Minister and the accompanying changes to administrative arrangements, I took the decision to create clusters of directorates to support the key priorities of the Government and the further development of the one-government model.

After much consideration and discussion I am satisfied that TAMS and the Environment and Planning Directorate work together in a highly effective and collaborative manner. In areas where Ministers and I agree there can be further improvements steps are in place to ensure these improvements are made.

I believe a closer working relationship through the cluster arrangements will allow the Government to better observe the interdependencies, different perspectives and opportunities to improve our approach to achieving sustainable conservation outcomes for the territory.

I have therefore decided that there would be no tangible benefit in making any further administrative changes at this point in time. Whilst it is ultimately my decision to make, I make this decision with the support of both responsible Ministers.