

## Buswell handpasses native title to Premier

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Colin Barnett will assume responsibility for the Office of Native Title after Treasurer Troy Buswell asked that it be taken from him because it clashed with his other portfolios.

Mr Buswell made the request in a letter to the Premier obtained by Labor MP Ljiljana Ravlich under Freedom of Information laws.

"I am aware that under current ministerial arrangements the above office and associated legislation has been allocated to my portfolio," he wrote in the letter, dated October 3.

"Given the lack of synergy between the Office of Native Title and my substantive portfolio responsibilities for Treasury, Commerce, Housing and Works and Science and Innovation, I request that you consider reallocating this office and the associated legislation to a more suitable minister. I look forward to your early advice in relation to the above."

Following queries from *The West Australian* last night, Mr Barnett revealed he would take control of the Office of Native Title "to better link its actions and role to complementary offices and departments".

Opposition Leader Eric Ripper said: "I think it must be embarrassing for the Premier that the Treasurer has rejected this significant policy area."