

KALGOORLIE QUARANTINE AND DECONTAMINATION FACILITY

1008. Hon COLIN de GRUSSA to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:

I refer to a recent interview by the minister with the ABC Goldfields–Esperance, Mid West and Wheatbelt Rural Report regarding the Kalgoorlie inspection and decontamination facility, and her comment that accommodation was being provided at the facility to truck drivers without the knowledge of management at the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development.

- (1) It is understood that accommodation has been available at the facility for a number of years, so why was it that DPIRD management had no knowledge of this practice?
- (2) When did the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development first become aware that accommodation for truck drivers was being provided at the facility?
- (3) During 2018, 2019 and 2020, was the facility attended by DPIRD personnel with management responsibility for the facility, other than the officer responsible for its daily operation?
- (4) If yes to (2), for each year, approximately how many times did this occur?

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:

I thank the member for the question.

- (1)–(4) By way of background, as I understand it, over the last year about 150 shipments of animals were moved through the quarantine facility. Obviously, not all of those would have involved overnight stays, so it is important to understand that there would not have been people staying at the facility every day. As we have said time and again, the provision of accommodation at the Kalgoorlie inspection and decontamination facility became known to current management after staff attended the site following the death of the senior quarantine inspector for livestock based at Kalgoorlie. Although details of the number of visits and the buildings visited on the site cannot be determined in this time frame, it is likely that senior staff had visited the Kalgoorlie inspection and decontamination facility in the periods referenced in the question, but we do not know whether there was evidence that accommodation was being provided on those days—accommodation being mattresses that were provided for passing truckies. The decision to end the provision of accommodation facilities was based on identified risks, including those related to the transmission of COVID-19, which may not have been considered on other visits to the site.