

GOGO STATION — IRRIGATION

202. Hon COLIN TINCKNELL to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:

Agricultural development is an important priority, but it is also important that that development is sustainable. My question relates to the proposal to establish an irrigated agricultural development at Gogo Station in the Kimberley.

- (1) Has the department conducted a land capability assessment?
- (2) If yes to (1), what were the outcomes, and can the Department of Agriculture and Food provide a copy of the assessment?
- (3) If no to (1), why not?

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:

- (1)–(3) I thank the member for the question. I understand his general concerns and I understand this whole issue of sustainability. It is not generally the practice of the state government to do land capability studies other than at a very macro level, so the state government has not done specific studies on the land of Gogo. That is obviously the responsibility or in the interest of the pastoralist, who is seeking to have a diversification permit with irrigated horticulture. It is important to understand that some of the concerns the member might have are currently being dealt with by the Environmental Protection Authority, which is doing an extensive examination of all the environmental factors associated with this proposal. Land and water assessments are being undertaken by my department and the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, but they are more strategic in nature. The assessment of the impact of the Gogo proposition is fundamentally being dealt with by the EPA.