

WEED MANAGEMENT

2706. Mr C.J. Tallentire to the Minister for Agriculture and Food

- (1) When will the Bio-security and Agricultural Management (BAM) Regulations be completed and tabled in Parliament?
- (2) Will environmental weeds be included in the BAM Regulations?
- (3) Since 6 September 2008 how much money has been spent on tackling:
 - (a) agricultural weeds; and
 - (b) environmental weeds?
- (4) Does the Government support the continued work of the Western Australian Weeds Committee?
- (5) What financial support does the Government give the Western Australian Weeds Committee?
- (6) When will the State Weed Plan be reviewed?
- (7) What funding and support is available for the review?
- (8) What percentage of funds allocated to bio-security go to fighting weeds that are already in Western Australia?
- (9) What percentage of funds is spent on keeping weeds out of Western Australia?

Mr D.T. REDMAN replied:

- (1) The Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act regulations and subsidiary instruments are at various stages of completion. Consultation with various stakeholders will need to be completed before regulatory instruments are tabled for consideration in Parliament.

Currently, three sets of regulations under the Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act are in the consultation phase and are close to the end of the period for public comment. These regulations deal with the Industry Funded Schemes through a mechanism established under the Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act. These Industry Funded Schemes will allow grain/seed/hay producers, cattle producers, sheep and goat producers, to raise funds to self-manage serious pests and diseases which might threaten the viability and sustainability of their industries.

There are a further three sets of draft regulations with the Parliamentary Counsel's Office. The timelines for return and further development of these is very difficult to predict but could be in the order of 12 to 18 months. These regulations will also need to go through a consultation phase.

There are other sets of regulations such as chemical residue management and stock identification which are in less advanced stages of development. National commitments and federal legislation may impact upon these areas so it is difficult to determine when development of these regulations will be completed.

The introduction of Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act subsidiary legislation and instruments will be an ongoing process with the bulk of it occurring over the next 2 years.

- (2) Under the Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act, the Minister may declare an organism of a kind specified or described in the declaration as a declared pest for an area if there are reasonable grounds for believing that the organism has or may have an adverse effect on:
 - a. another organism in the area;
 - b. human beings in the area; or
 - c. the environment, or part of the environment, in the area; or
 - d. agricultural activities, fishing or pearling activities, or related commercial activities, carried on, or intended to be carried on, in the area.

This allows a range of plant species to be included in the Biosecurity and Agriculture Management regulations and subsidiary legislation and instruments. Plant species currently declared under the Agriculture and Related Resources Protection Act 1976 will also be declared under Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act. These include a number of plants that are considered to also have environmental impacts e.g. blackberry and arum lily.

- (3) (a) The total consolidated funds expenditure by the Department of Agriculture and Food's (the Department) Invasive Species program on agricultural weeds over the

period 1 September 2008 to 31 March 2010 is estimated to be \$3.218 million, which is 20.2 per cent of the program's consolidated funds expenditure over that period.

- (b) The expenditure on environmental weeds over the same period was an estimated \$758,000, which is 4.8 per cent of the program's consolidated funds expenditure. A further \$253,000 was spent on social or amenity weeds over that period.
- (4) The Western Australian Weeds Committee ceased on 30 June 2009 when the membership terms of all its members expired.
- (5) Because the Western Australian Weeds Committee is now defunct there is no financial support from Government for that committee.
- (6) There are no immediate plans to review the State Weed Plan for Western Australia.
- (7) Not applicable.
- (8) 6.7 per cent of the total consolidated funds allocation to the Department's Biosecurity programs (\$2.539 million out of \$37.647 million) was allocated to the Invasive Species program in 2009/10 for post-border weeds activities. That is, on weeds already present in the State.
- (9) The Department's Border Biosecurity program delivers quarantine activities aimed at preventing weeds and other quarantine-risk material from entering the State. Data on the program's expenditure on weeds (as opposed to other sorts of quarantine risk material) are not available, since border quarantine activities target risk material as a whole. The Border Biosecurity program received 24 per cent of the Department's total consolidated funds biosecurity funding in 2009/10.