

COTTON BUSH CONTROL

1061. Hon SALLY TALBOT to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:

I refer to the spread of cotton bush throughout the south west, especially in the Waroona and Harvey shires.

- (1) When will the cotton bush response plan be completed?
- (2) Will it be made available to the public?
- (3) What are the major strategies outlined in the response plan?
- (4) What is the Department of Agriculture and Food currently doing to assist shires and landholders manage infestations of cotton bush in the south west?

Hon KEN BASTON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of this question.

- (1) The response plan is currently being finalised. Consultation on the plan is scheduled to be completed by mid-November 2014.
- (2) Yes, following consultation.
- (3) Major strategies include working with communities through a community coordinated approach; working towards establishing biosecurity groups. Where appropriate, the biosecurity groups may be recognised by the minister as a recognised biosecurity group and a declared pest rate may be considered in the group's area. This will enable funds to be available to support operational capacity for the RBGs. Other major strategies involve significant support from the Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia through information such as control information and advice, planning and corporate governance advice. Where appropriate, a compliance process is established to support community outcomes.
- (4) DAFWA is working closely with three biosecurity groups in the south west, targeting cotton bush. This includes seed funding and the provision of control information and advice. DAFWA is also establishing a compliance process to support the biosecurity groups' goals in managing cotton bush.