

CARAVAN PARKS AND CAMPING GROUNDS — LONG-STAY SITES

6164. Hon Kate Doust to the Minister for Commerce

I refer the Minister to the Economics and Industry Standing Committee's Report Provision, use and regulation of Caravan Parks (and Camping Grounds) in Western Australia, and the Residential Parks (Long-stay Tenants) Act (the Act), and I ask —

- (1) How many unique long-stay residents' sites are there in Western Australia (as at 21 September 2012)?
- (2) How many unique long-stay residents' sites have been audited in the following years —
 - (a) 2010;
 - (b) 2011; and
 - (c) 2012 (as at 21 September 2012)?
- (3) How many unique long-stay residents' sites will be audited for the remainder of 2012 and the following calendar year 2013?
- (4) Are long-stay resident sites subject to random auditors, and if not, why not?
- (5) If yes to (4), how many random audits have been conducted in the following years —
 - (a) 2010;
 - (b) 2011;
 - (c) 2012 (as at 21 September 2012);
 - (d) how many audits will be conducted in 2013; and
 - (e) how much notice is given to operators and tenants before a random audit is performed?
- (6) How many unique long-stay residents sites have been found to be non-compliant with the Act for following years —
 - (a) 2010;
 - (b) 2011; and
 - (c) 2012 (as at 21 September 2012)?
- (7) What fines has the department issued for matters relating to non-compliance with the Act for the following years —
 - (a) 2010;
 - (b) 2011; and
 - (c) 2012 (as at 21 September 2012)?
- (8) Will the Minister table the Department of Commerce communication strategy in relation to the statutory review into the Act, and if not, why not?
- (9) Does this strategy include mailing a hard copy of the Consultation Discussion Paper to each Park Liaison Committee, and if not, why not?

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN replied:

- (1) There is no statutory requirement for parks with long-stay residents to report this information to the Department of Commerce. During 2011/12, the Department commenced collating details of parks that appeared to offer long-stay sites, as part of its voluntary proactive compliance program. There are currently 223 parks with long-stay sites listed in the Department's database.
- (2) The number of parks with long-stay sites visited as part of the Department's voluntary proactive compliance visit program was:
 - (a) 84.
 - (b) 69.
 - (c) 81 (to 21 September 2012).

This adds up to more than the 223 parks currently in the Department's long-stay database because it includes visits to parks that have now been identified as having no long-stay sites and/or long-stay residents.

- (3) Nineteen parks with long-stay sites will be visited as part of the proactive compliance program during the balance of 2012. Fifty parks are scheduled to be visited during 2013.

- (4) Parks which offer long-stay sites are subject to voluntary proactive compliance visits. Visits to parks are scheduled on a random basis, although visits are grouped in regional locations for efficiency purposes. Visits to parks in the future will be conducted on a rolling three-year schedule.
- (5) The number of parks with long-stay sites visited randomly as part of the Department's voluntary proactive compliance visit program was:
- (a)–(c) See answer to question (2)
 - (d) 50 parks are scheduled for visits in 2013.
 - (e) 1–8 weeks' notice. Park operators are telephoned in advance to ensure they will be available for the visit, and to inform the Park Liaison Committee, if there is one established.
- (6) A checklist is used to assess a park's compliance with legislation as well as other best practices. The checklist is available from the Department of Commerce's website, for parks to prepare themselves for a visit. The number of parks that did not achieve full compliance are as follows:
- (a) 26.
 - (b) 27.
 - (c) 13 (to 21 September 2012).

No significant breaches of Residential Parks (Long-stay Tenants) Act 2006 have been identified. As a result, and in line with the Department's prosecution and enforcement policy, educational advice and voluntary compliance has been achieved.

- (7) See (6) above
- (8) To date, the Department's communication strategy has involved implementing the tasks outlined below.
- Letters providing details about how to obtain copies of the Discussion Paper on the Statutory Review of the Residential Parks (Long-stay Tenants) Act 2006 and provide feedback to the review were sent to:
 - all Members of Parliament;
 - major stakeholders, such as the Park Home Owners Association, the Council on the Ageing WA and the Caravan Industry Association WA;
 - non-government organisations, relevant Government Departments, other industry and individual stakeholders who had previously written to my office and the Department of Commerce;
 - all caravan park operators in WA, according to a database of parks compiled by the Department of Commerce in conjunction with other Government Departments.

The letters also encouraged recipients to forward the information to their relevant networks. The letters to park operators similarly requested that the information be forwarded to all their long-stay tenants.

- A media release was sent to all relevant media outlets.
- Department staff, including regional office staff, have provided information about the review during regular radio segments.
- An advertisement about the review appeared in:
 - community newspapers,
 - Have A Go News, which includes distribution to supermarkets, sporting clubs and caravan parks; and
 - the West Australian newspaper with Statewide circulation.

The advertisement provided information about how to access the Discussion Paper and a survey by phone or online.

- An email was sent to the Park Home Owners Association and the Council on the Ageing WA to provide individual officer contact numbers for long-stay tenants to call to provide confidential feedback to the review.

Prior to consultation closing on 30 November 2012, the strategy will involve implementing the tasks outlined below.

- Copies of a short video explaining the review and key issues (that is on the Department website) will be sent to relevant non-government organisations and tenant stakeholders.
 - A reminder letter will be sent to all caravan park operators in WA to seek their feedback to the review and to encourage their long-stay tenants to provide feedback.
 - Further promotion of the review will be undertaken using a variety of media, and during proactive visits of residential parks by the Department of Commerce.
 - The Department will arrange to speak with long-stay tenant focus groups where possible.
- (9) No. There is no requirement for a Park Liaison Committee (PLC) to be registered with the Department under the Residential Parks (Long-stay Tenants) Act 2006, as a PLC is an internal body in place to resolve issues between tenants and the operator. Furthermore, a large number of parks are not required to have a PLC, as they have less than 20 long-stay sites. As such, it is not possible for such a mail-out to occur.
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