

ANIMAL ACTIVISM — TRESPASS

**530. Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN to the Leader of the House representing the Attorney General:**

I refer to the Attorney General's announcement reported in *The West Australian* of 23 May 2019 regarding what he describes as “mushy-headed vegans” and that he will change the law —

... in a substantial way that spells trouble, big trouble for anyone who goes trespassing on agricultural land with the intention of disrupting agriculture ...

Including empowering courts to make orders —

... that will not only see them on a future occasion prosecuted for trespass but also for being in contempt of court ...

- (1) What precisely are the changes that the Attorney General will introduce to deter protesters from trespassing on agricultural property and interfering with lawful agricultural activity, and when will he introduce them?
- (2) Will the laws extend to protesters trespassing upon non-agricultural property and interfering with lawful activity unconnected with agriculture; and, if not, why not?
- (3) Will the laws extend to protests by unions and other pressure groups that involve trespass and disruption of lawful activity; and, if not, why not?
- (4) Will the laws extend to prohibiting protesters from interfering with lawful activity by affixing themselves to structures and equipment; and, if not, why not?

**Hon SUE ELLERY replied:**

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

- (1) The proposed amendments target this form of unlawful protest, including by introducing circumstances of aggravation for the criminal offence of trespass. The maximum penalty in these circumstances will also be doubled. The new laws will be introduced to Parliament at the earliest opportunity contingent on cabinet approval and the usual legislative drafting process.
- (2)–(4) No. The proposal is a targeted response to a specific issue—the repeated unlawful interference with agricultural activity by certain activists.