

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD — COTTON BUSH — PRESTON BEACH

2526. Hon Robin Chapple to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:

I refer to the contamination of land by cotton bush on forests and properties that are attached to the Preston Beach townsite, including the Yalgorup National Park, and ask:

- (a) has the Department of Agriculture and Food and/or Field Officer, Lindsay Strange undertaken any inspections of the area for cotton bush;
- (b) if yes to (a), please provide a list of all inspections;
- (c) if no to (a), why not;
- (d) has the Peel–Harvey Biosecurity Group undertaken any inspections of the area for cotton bush;
- (e) if yes to (d), please provide a list of all inspections;
- (f) if no to (d), why not;
- (g) will the Minister provide information on the status of cotton bush, including an assessment of the success or failure of the eradication of cotton bush in that area; and
- (h) if no to (g), why not?

Hon Ken Baston replied:

- (a) No
- (b) Not applicable
- (c) Cotton bush is a widespread weed that is established beyond eradication. The recommended response is one of management to minimise impacts. This is best achieved through a community coordinated approach. The Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia (DAFWA) assists community-based biosecurity groups to control widespread weeds. This includes compliance roles applied in identified priority areas. The properties referred to were not identified by community processes as a priority area for compliance.
- (d) DAFWA is not informed about inspections in this area that may have been undertaken by the Peel–Harvey Biosecurity Group. If they have undertaken inspections of this location, it has not resulted in this location being identified as a priority area for Cotton bush control by the group.
- (e)–(f) Not applicable
- (g) Cotton bush is a well-established declared weed in the South West of Western Australia. DAFWA records show there are almost 3000 properties with known infestations. Eradication of Cotton bush is not feasible. Under the *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007*, Cotton bush is categorised as a C3 species which is designated for a management response, not eradication. A management-based approach to minimise the impact of Cotton bush can be effective through a community coordinated approach. This is the approach that is recommended by DAFWA for established invasive species.
- (h) Not applicable