

WILD DOGS AND FOXES — BOUNTIES

351. Hon RICK MAZZA to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:

This is question C355. I refer to the comments on page 20 of *The West Australian* dated 26 July 2013 and attributed to the acting Minister for Agriculture and Food.

- (1)
 - (a) Does the minister agree with the statement that the payment of bounties could put the focus on the number of kills rather than minimising the impact of dogs and foxes on livestock?
 - (b) If yes to (1)(a), how, then, are bounties less effective?
 - (c) If no to (1)(a), does he support bounties as a way to reduce wild dog and fox numbers?
- (2) Is the government's preference a strategic approach to reduce wild dog and fox numbers and attacks?

Hon KEN BASTON replied:

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

- (1)
 - (a) The Australian experience is that payment of bounties leads to a reduction in the number of wild dogs and foxes.
 - (b) To be effective, a bounty on wild dogs or foxes needs to result in a demonstrated reduction in the number of wild dogs and foxes in the target area.
 - (b) I am a strong supporter of the use of bounties as one of the key tools that are needed for wild dog and fox control. In 2014, I plan to support a new bounty program in the rangelands by offering matched funding via recognised biosecurity groups.
- (2) The government's current approach to wild dog and fox control includes the employment of doggers, the upgrade and extension of the state barrier fence and working in partnership with industry groups for adoption of best-on-ground control practices. No doubt when an integrated approach is taken, a substantial reduction in wild dog numbers and impact can be achieved.