

COTTON BUSH CONTROL

1000. Hon DARREN WEST to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:

I refer to the epidemic of cotton bush along the Darling Scarp.

- (1) Is the Minister for Agriculture and Food fully aware of the destruction this weed is causing to agricultural producers?
- (2) What are the minister and the Department of Agriculture and Food doing in the short term to address this ever-growing epidemic?
- (3) Is the minister aware that some of the major landowners allowing cotton bush to grow uncontrolled are state government agencies? If so, what action is the minister taking to enforce compliance on those agencies?

Hon KEN BASTON replied:

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

- (1) Yes; narrow-leaf cotton bush is a widespread and established weed that is declared under the Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007, better known as the BAM act.
- (2) Cotton bush is best controlled at a landscape scale through a community-coordinated approach. Department of Agriculture and Food staff are actively developing this approach where cotton bush is well established.
- (3) Control of plants under the BAM act is the responsibility of both private and public land managers. Public land managers are participating in a community-coordinated approach for control of cotton bush. Compliance action will be considered where it is feasible and effective to do so as part of the current approach.