

LIVE EXPORT — INQUIRY — FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

494. Hon RICK MAZZA to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:

Today my freedom of information application, which followed the Minister for Agriculture and Food's unsatisfactory response to my March 2018 questions, C032 and C058, seeking information on the announcement of a state-based inquiry into aspects of the livestock export trade, is 50 days overdue. The Minister for Agriculture and Food used an alleged lack of response to her own freedom of information application to the federal Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources as a mechanism to raid the offices of Emanuel Exports.

- (1) Can the minister please confirm that my application is, in fact, 50 days overdue?
- (2) Can the minister provide an explanation for the delay?
- (3) Can the minister advise the appropriate contact for information as to how I can legally facilitate a similar raid to obtain the information that I am seeking?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

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

- (1) In accordance with section 13(3) of the Freedom of Information Act 1992, the permitted period is 45 days after the access application is received or such other period as is agreed between the agency and the applicant or allowed by the commissioner. The original due date for the member's FOI application was 7 May 2018. The member's office subsequently agreed to a two-week extension of the due date, making the new due date 21 May 2018. His office then refused any additional extension to the due date. As at today, the member's FOI application is 36 days overdue.
- (2) Since 2012, the FOI unit in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet has provided support for the coordination and processing of FOI applications in ministerial offices. The FOI unit has advised that the total number of FOI applications received in the 2017–18 financial year on behalf of minister's offices and the department is nearly double the total number received for the entire 2016–17 financial year. Many of these applications have tended to be very broad and imprecise and have required many attempts by the FOI unit to narrow the scope, which in turn has caused delays in completing FOI applications.
- (3) The Premier is not aware of any legal avenues for a member of Parliament to raid a minister of the Crown's office.