

NATIVE VEGETATION — CLEARING

1234. Mr C.J. Tallentire to the Minister for Environment:

- (1) How much vegetation clearing, in total hectares, has been approved under Part V of the *Environmental Protection Act* each year for the last 10 calendar years?
- (2) What action is the government taking to detect illegal clearing of native vegetation?
- (3) How many hectares of unauthorised native vegetation clearing has occurred since September 2008?
- (4) How many hectares of clearing of native vegetation have occurred where there is a claimed exemption from the requirement to obtain a clearing permit?

**Mr A.P. Jacob replied:**

- (1) 2004–2005 — 9 950 hectares  
2005–2006 — 5 608 hectares  
2006–2007 — 9 943 hectares  
2007–2008 — 9 702 hectares  
2008–2009 — 18 160 hectares  
2009–2010 — 14 416 hectares  
2010–2011 — 26 927 hectares  
2011–2012 — 18 413 hectares  
2012–2013 — 13 304 hectares

The Department of Environment Regulation (DER) records clearing permits in financial years, commencing from when the clearing provisions were introduced into the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* on 8 July 2004. This information is published in annual reports.

- (2) Annual reviews of satellite data are conducted by DER to identify vegetation change. This data is assessed with information obtained through compliance actions and programs, strategic reviews of permits, incidents reported to DER by the community and other Government agencies. Based on the analysis of this information, and investigations DER determines whether unlawful clearing is likely to have occurred. DER's Enforcement and Prosecution Policy provides general guidance on how it administers its statutory enforcement and prosecution functions.
- (3) DER has advised that from 1 September 2008 to 19 September 2013, 1 965 hectares of native vegetation was cleared without authority.
- (4) There is no requirement to advise DER when clearing has occurred under an exemption.