

DUNG BEETLE STUDY

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

I hope that the answer to this question will contain at least one pun! I refer to the two-year dung beetle study announced by the previous Minister for Agriculture and Food in November 2011 and commenced in early 2012.

- (1) What is the current status of the study?
- (2) Have any dung beetles been released as part of the study; and, if so, where?
- (3) If no to (2), when will dung beetles be released and where?
- (4) If the study has been completed, when will the results be made public?
- (5) What has been the total cost of the study to date?

The PRESIDENT: The minister for dung beetles!

Hon Ken Travers: There are flies on you!

Hon KEN BASTON replied:

Yes, there are!

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

- (1) The Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia study is progressing very well and is providing a much better understanding of existing dung beetle ecology. It is working towards identifying optimal release sites for the two new species.
- (2) No.
- (3) The rearing of the two new species is progressing well in Canberra and releases are planned for late 2014. Release locations will be confirmed when the DAFWA study is complete.
- (4) The study will be completed in February 2014 and a report presented soon after.
- (5) Approximately \$260 000.