

NARROW-LEAF COTTON BUSH

1387. Hon ADELE FARINA to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:

I refer to the management of declared plants.

- (1) What action has been taken to manage narrow-leaf cotton bush on state-controlled public land?
- (2) What is the total amount of funding invested by the state government in the control of narrow-leaf cotton bush in the south west region this financial year?
- (3) In relation to (2), what measures are being implemented and where in the south west region?

Hon KEN BASTON replied:

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

- (1) Managers of public land are required to control declared pests on their land. A coordinated approach for control of widespread pests is arranged through biosecurity groups. Public land is included in the approach being adopted.
- (2) The Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia is funding approximately 1.5 FTE—\$150 000—to support control of narrow-leaf cotton bush in 2014–15. In addition, an estimated \$91 000 will be made available from grant funding to match funds raised by biosecurity groups for control of narrow-leaf cotton bush.
- (3) DAFWA supports the development of biosecurity groups and their adoption of a community coordinated approach. Two groups have formed for the primary purpose of controlling narrow-leaf cotton bush. They are the Peel–Harvey and Leschenault Biosecurity Groups. The groups provide best practice information and engage landholders within their community for declared plant control.

In consultation with community and industry, DAFWA has prepared a situation statement, a response plan and an impact assessment for narrow-leaf cotton bush. In addition, agency capacity is being built in community engagement processes.

DAFWA is enforcing compliance in identified high-risk areas for narrow-leaf cotton bush. Initial correspondence was sent to 600 landholders. Property inspections have been undertaken twice for 33 noncompliant landholders resulting in 50 per cent compliance on these properties. The third inspection of noncompliant properties will be undertaken in December. Ongoing noncompliant properties will be issued with a pest control notice.