

WESTERN RINGTAIL POSSUMS

969. Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:

I refer to the four deaths of western ringtail possums associated with the collaring project licensed as AEC 21-1-05.

- (1) Will the minister please table a copy of the adverse event reports provided to the animal ethics committee regarding each of these deaths?
- (2) Will the minister please provide advice regarding the presence of pouch young in the deceased animals and the outcomes for any such young?

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:

I thank the member for the question.

- (1) I am advised that the 2013 *Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes* requires animal ethics committee members to maintain confidentiality regarding the content of applications and the deliberations of the AEC.
- (2) I am advised that a female western ringtail possum was presented to a veterinary hospital in the south west in late August 2022. It was declared dead at presentation. The possum had two joeys in her pouch that were alive but as they were furless and weighed only 75 grams they were considered non-viable and were euthanised. A total of 52 possums have been collared. I understand that this was the only one of the five that have since died that died with a joey.