

FISHERIES — REGULATORY COMPLIANCE — MONITORING AND ENFORCEMENT

1814. Hon Dr Brad Pettitt to the parliamentary secretary to the Minister for Fisheries:

I refer to the Office of the Auditor General’s “Regulation of Commercial Fishing” report dated 7 December 2022 which found key weaknesses in the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development’s (DPIRD) monitoring and enforcement of regulatory compliance of the commercial fishing industry, I ask:

- (a) The Auditor General recommended (recommendation (3)) DPIRD strengthen its integrity framework by (i) developing and formalising strategies to mitigate the risk of industry capture, (ii) ensuring the framework reflects integrity risks specific to fishery officers and the industry, and (iii) ensuring complaints about conduct are investigated independently. The implantation time frame for each of these three actions is December 2023. For each of these actions, will the Minister table:
 - (i) details of any relevant improvements DPIRD has made to its integrity framework;
 - (ii) whether the action will be fully completed within the December 2023 implementation timeframe; and
 - (iii) if no to (ii), the reason for the delay and when the action is currently anticipated to be completed; and
- (b) The Auditor General also recommended (recommendation (1(b))) DPIRD set clear targets for its compliance activities and track performance against those targets to assess whether compliance activities are undertaken and effective. Will the Minister table:
 - (i) the targets DPIRD has implemented for its compliance activities, if any;
 - (ii) if no targets have been implemented to date, why not and when is this anticipated to occur; and
 - (iii) whether DPIRD intends to implement any targets in addition to those identified at (i) and (ii)?

Hon Kyle McGinn replied:

- (a) DPIRD has undertaken a comprehensive integrity review including release of an integrity framework in September 2023. The framework applies to all staff including fisheries officers and includes reference to impartiality including declaration and management of conflicts of interest. The complaints process has also been enhanced to require all complaints involving Fisheries and Marine officers to have independent oversight. In addition, the risk of industry capture is explicitly recognised in the department’s statement of Regulatory Compliance Approach, consistent with the Auditor General’s recommendations.
- (b) The focus of the Auditor General’s review was commercial fisheries. Targets based on risk have been set for all of the State’s commercial fisheries for the 2023–24 reporting period. It is not appropriate to provide those publicly as they include specific compliance activities.