

PRESCRIBED BURNING — BURN OPTIONS PROGRAM

1457. Hon Dr Brad Pettitt to the parliamentary secretary to the Minister for Environment:

The Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) Website describes the planning process for prescribed burns and includes a map identifying burns on the current Burn Options Program, I ask:

- (a) how many prescribed burns are currently planned as part of the Burn Options Program;
- (b) for how many of these burn areas have draft prescribed fire plans been developed:
 - (i) will the Minister please identify these areas and table the draft plans; and
 - (ii) if no to (i), why not;
- (c) for how many of these burn areas have Prescribed Fire Plans been finalised:
 - (i) will the Minister please identify these areas and table the Plans; and
 - (ii) if no to (i), why not;
- (d) under which authority and by who are the final prescribed fire plans signed off;
- (e) what stakeholder consultation is undertaken on draft prescribed fire plans;
- (f) how are stakeholders identified and what does the consultation involve;
- (g) are draft prescribed fire plans provided for comment as part of this consultation process;
- (h) how many requests have been received by the DBCA for access to draft prescribed fire plans by stakeholders over the last 2 years, for which areas, and what was the result of these requests;
- (i) does the Department consult with independent experts, ecologists, scientists or others in developing fire prescription plans:
 - (i) if so, how many times has such consultation occurred over the last 2 years, and on which plans; and
 - (ii) if not, why not; and
- (j) does the Department consult with traditional owners or others in developing fire prescription plans:
 - (i) if so, how many times has such consultation occurred over the last 2 years, and on which plans; and
 - (ii) if not, why not?

Hon Darren West replied:

- (a) For the 2022/23 financial year, there are 481 prescribed burns that have been endorsed by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) for inclusion in its Burn Options program.
- (b) 140 draft plans are currently in differing stages of development.
 - (i) A list of the plans in development can be provided. [See tabled paper 2412.]
 - (ii) As these plans are still being developed and have yet to be endorsed or approved, it is not appropriate to table these draft plans.
- (c) 251
 - (i)–(ii) A list of finalised plans can be provided. [See tabled paper 2412.]
- (d) The level of approval required is determined by the individual prescribed burn's final risk level. High risk burns are approved by DBCA's Manager Fire Management Services Branch, medium risk burns are approved by the relevant DBCA Regional Manager.
- (e) DBCA's prescribed burn planning manual requires opportunity to be provided for key stakeholders to provide input or seek more information at various stages of the burn program planning process.
- (f) DBCA considers that external stakeholders in prescribed burn planning may include:
 - neighbouring landholders or managers;
 - traditional owners and joint management partners;
 - local government;
 - bush fire brigades;

Department of Fire and Emergency Services;
State Government agencies and public utilities;
special interest groups;
industry; and
peak representative bodies.

DBCA stakeholder engagement during burn program planning is intended to provide the opportunity for stakeholders to be made aware of the burn program, individual burns and to facilitate an opportunity to provide input that can be considered as part of the burn planning process.

- (g) No. Due to the complexity and format (multiple components) of the prescribed fire plan, supporting documentation and sensitive operational information, these plans are not provided for stakeholder comment.
- (h) Given the level of agency resourcing required to source and provide potentially relevant information, it is not considered to be a reasonable use of government resources. I am happy to arrange a briefing by DBCA for the Honourable Member.
- (i) DBCA engages with independent experts, ecologists, and scientists in developing its technical information to inform and guide fire managers during the development of prescribed burn plans.
 - (i)–(ii) Given the level of agency resourcing required to source and provide potentially relevant information, it is not considered to be a reasonable use of government resources. I am happy to arrange a briefing by DBCA for the Honourable Member.
- (j) Yes.
 - (i)–(ii) Given the level of agency resourcing required to source and provide potentially relevant information, it is not considered to be a reasonable use of government resources. I am happy to arrange a briefing by DBCA for the Honourable Member.