



Deputy Premier of Western Australia
Minister for Health; Training and Workforce Development

Our Ref: 25-42224
Your Ref: Petition No 25

Hon Simon O'Brien MLC
Chairman
Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs
Parliament House
PERTH WA 6000

Dear Mr  O'Brien

Thank you for your letter of 16 September 2014 seeking clarification some points from my letter of 13 August 2014, which addressed a number of issues raised in Petition No 25 – Opposing use of pesticides on public land and open spaces.

1. The requirements of the Department of Health (DOH) publications described in my letter would only be mandatory if they are recognised by Act or Regulation. The publications were originally prepared as Codes of Practice, so that they could be legally recognised by a number of State Regulations. This approach was, in fact, approved by State Cabinet in 2007, but never implemented, as the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) launched its own national review of the legislation governing the Controlled Use of Pesticides. The COAG review has not, unfortunately, recommended the "recognise the Codes of Practice" approach, preferring the amendment of all States legislation to achieve uniformity. In the interests of national uniformity, we had no choice but to shelve our State proposal to recognise the Codes.
2. The two publications provide comprehensive and practical "state of the art" measures that allow pesticides to be used safely in public open spaces in Western Australia. The fact that very few reports and complaints of pesticide misuse are received by the DOH is a measure of the degree to which community health is being protected and, in my view, is significantly dependant on the impact of the publications. It is always possible that isolated cases of misuse may occur, but I am satisfied that there is no systemic failure.

I trust that this information provides the clarification you seek. Please contact me again if you require further information or clarification on the points raised in my response of 13 August 2014.

Yours sincerely


Dr Kim Hames MLA
DEPUTY PREMIER
MINISTER FOR HEALTH

16 OCT 2014