

PRESCRIBED BURNING PROGRAM — BACKLOG

2648. Hon Nigel Hallett to the Minister for Environment

Whilst the Department is to be congratulated on reaching its 200 000 hectare prescribed burning target last year, what plans have been made to address the backlog of nearly 250 000 hectare that still exists?

Hon DONNA FARAGHER replied:

The prescribed burning target referred to is a nominal annual target which applies to the south-west regions of Western Australia. In years where the target has not been reached, it is primarily due to unfavourable weather conditions. In years such as the previous one of 2009–10 where the target has been exceeded, prescribed burning will continue beyond reaching the target as suitable conditions prevail. This strategy is designed to not only maximise suitable burning opportunities, but also compensate partly for years where conditions have not been as favourable. This approach is facilitated by ensuring that the prescribed burning program is prepared and approved each year at a level well beyond the nominal target. For example, the recently approved 2010–11 spring burning program includes 242 candidate burns for the south-west totalling an area of more than 250,000 hectares.

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