

C 301

Question Without Notice

(of which some notice is given)

Hon Darren West to the Minister for Agriculture and Food

I refer to the announcement that, as of 1 July, the Department of Agriculture and Food will impose a charge of \$56 per 15 minutes for the inspection of imported seeds into WA, and I ask,

1. How was the charge rate of \$224 per hour calculated?
2. What is the projected revenue to the State Government from this charge?
3. Given that this charge will be paid by home gardeners, schools, community groups and other small volume seed importers, does the Minister support this excessive fee?

I thank the Hon. Member for some notice of this question.

1. The fees and charges for quarantine inspections is determined using the WA Treasury Costing Model and is in line with the State Government policy for full cost recovery of relevant services. The components within the approved Costing Model include; salaries, other salary allowances, salary on-costs; indirect corporate costs, superannuation, operating costs, depreciation, opportunity cost of capital, and debt recovery.
2. The projected revenue of charging inspection fees for private imports of seeds is estimated at \$40,000. These charges will be primarily paid by the commercial interstate supplier who has special charging arrangements with the Department. These suppliers have agreed to be charged for any inspections rather than the individual private importer. The major suppliers have indicated that they will not be passing on any inspection chargers.
3. The current quarantine inspection processes and the opportunity for special charging arrangements enable biosecurity risks to be effectively managed, as well as minimising the costs to the biosecurity risk creators (importers). Recreational gardeners and others can minimize costs of meeting their obligations under biosecurity regulations by ensuring that their interstate supplier is using special charging arrangements or by sourcing seeds within WA. Currently there are 104 interstate suppliers, including 52 seed suppliers involved in special charging arrangements.



MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE AND FOOD