

DECLARED PLANTS — BIO-SECURITY INSPECTIONS

4289. Mr M.P. Murray to the Minister for Agriculture and Food

Given there will be reduced property inspections for widely distributed declared plants (P3 and P4 categories), I ask:

- (a) how many bio-security inspections were being conducted before the property inspections were reduced;
- (b) how many inspections are being conducted now;
- (c) have the property inspections been reduced due to a lack of available resources; and
  - (i) if yes, will the Minister explain why there are no longer the resources available to continue property inspections at the previous rate; and
- (d) does the Minister have evidence that the reduction in property inspections will not increase any risk to properties?

Mr D.T. REDMAN replied:

- (a) In the 2009 calendar year, a total of 3 309 inspections were conducted for P3 and P4 Declared Plants statewide, of which 958 inspections were in the South West Agricultural region.
- (b) In the 2010 calendar year to date, a total of 2 571 inspections were conducted for P3 and P4 Declared Plants statewide, of which 704 were in the South West Agricultural region.
- (c) No, the reduction is due to biosecurity resources being diverted to higher priority weeds such as P2 (eradication) Declared Plants, and to other high priority activities on invasive species including surveillance.
  - (i) Not Applicable.
- (d) Any risks associated with reduced property inspections for P3 and P4 Declared Plants will be addressed in the future by the operation of regionally-based Recognised Biosecurity Groups (RBGs). These are a new mechanism developed under the Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007 (BAM Act) to deal with widespread declared pests, by giving landholders, industry and Government the opportunity to collaborate against widespread declared pests that are significant to a region.