

PUBLIC

23/09/13



**Hon Ken Baston MLC
Minister for Agriculture and Food**



Our ref: 47-01920

Samantha Parsons
Committee Clerk
Estimates and Financial Operations Committee
Parliament House
PERTH WA 6000

Icefoc@parliament.wa.gov.au

Dear Ms Parsons

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE – 2013/14 LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ESTIMATES
HEARINGS**

Thank you for your letter dated 3 September 2013 requesting answers to questions on notice in relation to the 2013/14 Budgets Estimates Committee hearing to be held on 27 September 2013.

As requested please find attached an electronic copy of the responses from the Department of Agriculture and Food which will also be provided in hard copy.

Yours sincerely

**KEN BASTON MLC
MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE AND FOOD**

Attachment: Questions on Notice 2013/14 response

20 SEP 2013

20 SEP 2013

20 SEP 2013

20 SEP 2013

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS
QUESTIONS ON NOTICE FOR THE 2013-14 BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARINGS
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD TO BE HELD ON
FRIDAY, 27 SEPTEMBER 2013

Hon. K Travers MLC asked –

(1) Page 726 (Business and Supply Chain Development) Employees (Full Time Equivalents) Line Items.

2012-13 Estimated Actual was 530, in the 2012-13 Budgeted the FTEs are reduced to 466.

Can the Minister provide advice on which positions will be cut to accommodate the reduction in FTEs?

ANSWER:

Not at this stage. The department's total cost of services for 2013-14 would have decreased if not for the introduction of new Royalties for Regions projects (under the Pilbara Hinterland Agriculture Development Initiative). This reduction in total cost of services and an increase in employee expenses will mean that the average number of FTEs must be reduced when compared to the previous year. Structural transformation is required to keep the salary expenditure under the salary cap. A process has commenced to review and prioritise the projects the department delivers against this service. The FTE reduction will be achieved through the recently announced Voluntary Separation Scheme and natural attrition.

(2) Page 728 (Resource Risk Management) Employees (Full Time Equivalents) Line Items.

2012-13 Estimated Actual was 535, in the 2012-13 Budgeted the FTEs are reduced to 511.

Can the Minister provide advice on which positions will be cut to accommodate the reduction in FTEs?

ANSWER:

Not at this stage. The department's total cost of services for 2013-14 would have decreased if not for the introduction of new Royalties for Regions projects (under the Pilbara Hinterland Agriculture Development Initiative). This reduction in total cost of services and an increase in employee expenses will mean that the average number of FTEs must be reduced when compared to the previous year. Structural transformation is required to keep the salary expenditure under the salary cap. A process has commenced to review and prioritise the projects the department delivers against this service. The FTE reduction will be achieved through the recently announced Voluntary Separation Scheme and natural attrition.

(3) *Does the Minister have any plans to reduce FTE's, in any of the following offices in Regional WA, and if yes by how much?*

- a) *Broome;*
- b) *Derby;*
- c) *Eucla;*
- d) *Narrogin; and*
- e) *Waroona.*

ANSWER:

- a) Broome – there are no plans to reduce the current FTE level
- b) Derby – although the Derby office will be closed by June 2015 there are no plans to reduce the current FTE level
- c) Eucla - there are no plans to reduce current FTE level
- d) Narrogin - there are no plans to reduce current FTE level
- e) Waroona - there are no plans to reduce current FTE level

(4) *Does the Minister have any plans to close or amalgamate any of the following offices in Regional WA?*

- a) *Broome;*
- b) *Derby;*
- c) *Eucla;*
- d) *Narrogin; and*
- e) *Waroona.*

If yes, which offices will be closed or amalgamated and what is the timeframe for these closures or amalgamations?

ANSWER:

- a) *Broome* - There are no plans to close the Department's Broome office.
- b) *Derby* - The Department has an office and depot (former APB) in Derby. Both of these properties are scheduled for disposal by June 2015.
- c) *Eucla* - There are no plans to close or amalgamate facilities.
- d) *Narrogin* - There are no plans to close or amalgamate the Department's Narrogin office.
- e) *Waroona* - There are no plans to close or amalgamate the Department's Waroona office.

(5) *Has the Department provided advice to the Minister that the following offices in Regional WA be closed or amalgamated?*

- a) *Kalgoorlie;*
- b) *Lake Grace;*
- c) *Margaret River; and*
- d) *Three Springs Office.*

If yes, which offices will be closed or amalgamated and what is the timeframe for these closures or amalgamations?

ANSWER:

- a) *Kalgoorlie* - No advice has been provided regarding closure or amalgamation at Kalgoorlie.
 - b) *Lake Grace* - The closure of the Department's Lake Grace office will take effect from 30 June 2014. The Department's Narrogin office will provide services to clients in the region. This impacts on two staff members.
 - c) *Margaret River* - Office lease expired in 2010.
 - d) *Three Springs Office* - Office has been closed and sold in the 2012/2013 financial year.
- (6) *Does the Department intend to close or amalgamate any other offices in Regional WA and if yes, please provide details?*

ANSWER:

The Department is committed to having an appropriate proportion of employees based in regional locations. To boost the regional capacity and presence to ensure a continued client focus, the Department has established a project to relocate metropolitan based strategic functions to a number of key regional centres by 2016.

The aim is to have a flexible, responsive, multi-disciplinary workforce located in key areas throughout the State. The Department's key regional centres have the facilities, assets and support staff necessary to operate in the most efficient and effective way.

- (7) *For each region in the State, how many FTE's have been cut in the following financial years?*
- a) *2009/10;*
 - b) *2010/11;*
 - c) *2011/12; and*
 - d) *2012/13.*

ANSWER:

Region	Financial year and FTE reduction			
	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13
Central Agricultural	13	20	4	1
Metropolitan	54	87	5	27
Northern Agricultural	15	16	2	2
Rangelands	5	10	6	8
South West Agricultural	8	13	2	2
Southern Agricultural	20	24	5	4

