

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 300

asked on Tuesday, 6 March 2007

MRS CUNNINGHAM ASKED THE MINISTER FOR NATURAL RESOURCES AND WATER AND MINISTER ASSISTING THE PREMIER IN NORTH QUEENSLAND (MR WALLACE)—

QUESTION:

With reference to properties affected by the *Vegetation Management Act 1999* and subsequent amendments—

- (1) How many properties (a) have been ground truthed and (b) have not been ground truthed?
- (2) Of those properties inspected, how many of those inspections were initiated by landowners?
- (3) What was the average time between request and departmental attendance?

ANSWER:

The Response to this Question on Notice has been based on the understanding that the questions related to Property Maps of Assessable Vegetation (PMAV's).

- (1) (a) As of 21 March 2007, the Department has received 3,191 applications for PMAVs. Applications are ground truthed when applicants contest Regional Ecosystem Mapping and have not provided sufficient information for the Department to assess the application.

The Department has received 429 PMAV applications to date that contest aspects of the mapping and is expecting to ground truth approximately 130 of these. This figure of 130 (4%) of a total of 3,191 represents a relatively small percentage of the overall applications, however, they are generally of a more complex nature. Assessment of contested PMAVs has only recently commenced in large numbers and to date 33 applications have been ground truthed.

- (b) Where applicants agree with the Regional Ecosystem Mapping, no ground truthing is required.
- (2) As mentioned in the response to question (1)(a), applications for PMAVs are only ground truthed where the applicant is contesting the Regional

Ecosystem Mapping and there is insufficient information provided by the applicant. The need for a field inspection is determined following a review of the information provided by the applicant. If there is insufficient information to make a decision, an inspection is scheduled with the applicant.

- (3) If the question is about the average response times for property inspections initiated by landowners, the Department does not maintain statistics on such average response times because property field inspections are initiated by the Department, as indicated in the response to question 2.

In dealing with PMAV applications, the time taken to finalise an application will vary, depending on whether the applicant is contesting the Regional Ecosystem Mapping and has provided sufficient information for the Department to further assess the application.

Applications for uncontested PMAVs that “lock-in” existing vegetation mapping are responded to by a letter of offer sent generally within 20 business days from date of receipt of the application. When an accepted offer is received by the Department, certification of the PMAV generally takes a further 10 business days. If applicants do not provide adequate information, delays in processing may occur and these timeframes cannot be met.

Those applications where the applicant is seeking to change some aspect of the mapping are generally complex and may require field visits to progress further assessment once assessment begins, and applicants will generally receive an offer within 30 business days. When an accepted offer is received by the Department, certification of the PMAV generally takes a further 10 business days.

The Department is committed to having all applications to the stage of offer by 30 June 2007.