

QUESTION ON NOTICE
No. 1831
Asked on 24 November 2009

Ms MALE asked the Minister for Primary Industries, Fisheries and Rural and Regional Queensland (MR MULHERIN)–

QUESTION:

What initiatives does the department have in place to manage wild dogs across the State?

ANSWER:

The Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation has a number of new and ongoing initiatives in place to assist landowners to manage wild dogs and to reduce their adverse impacts. Under the *Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002*, the management of wild dogs is a landowner responsibility.

As the lead government agency, Biosecurity Queensland is delivering on the 10 agreed actions arising from the independent review into wild dog management in Queensland (Kenny Report). The following initiatives have been adopted and are being implemented:

- The Queensland Wild Dog Strategy is in the process of being refreshed. The document sets out the high level aims of wild dog control across the state and identifies the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders in wild dog management.
- The Queensland Dog Offensive Group (QDOG), a wild dog advisory committee, has been formed and held its inaugural meeting on 17 November 2009. The group brings together state government, industry, local government and conservation groups in providing leadership for wild dog management across Queensland. I am pleased with the enthusiasm, drive and knowledge each member brings to the group. The range and breadth of issues to be considered is challenging, beginning with the implementation of a refreshed Wild Dog Strategy and ensuring all stakeholders share responsibility for meeting outcomes.
- Biosecurity Queensland has appointed a senior officer and a Wild Dog Coordinator to work with stakeholders to foster commitment to wild dog management within local communities, focusing initially on areas within the wild dog barrier fence.
- The Wild Dog Coordinator, along with existing Biosecurity Officers, will assist local government and landowners establish local wild dog management groups, comprising local stakeholders with a local chair. These groups will be encouraged to adopt the 'nil-tenure' approach to wild dog management. This model has been successfully applied in a number of areas across the state and has shown to reduce the adverse impacts of wild dogs through co-ordinated strategic control at the landscape level.

These actions complement the significant work already undertaken by policy, research and operational staff in Biosecurity Queensland:

- Biosecurity Queensland continues to deliver training and access to 1080 for baiting campaigns, participate in wild dog management committees and groups

and provide technical advice. Officers also participated in the recent AgForce Predator Field Days, attended by significant number of land managers, and funded through the Queensland Government Blueprint for the Bush – A Pest Offensive program.

- The Wild Dog Barrier Fence continues to be maintained by Biosecurity Queensland staff and the Queensland Government continues to fund 50 percent of the costs of the fence. The fence acts as a very effective barrier to wild dogs; a point highlighted recently by the independent review conducted into the Queensland barrier fences.
- Biosecurity Queensland continues to host the National Wild Dog Facilitator who has facilitated the development of landowner driven wild dog management groups across Queensland and acts as a link into national wild dog management issues. The facilitator is currently managing the development of a best practice manual for the use of guardian dogs which will help landowners decide whether or not this management option will suit their particular enterprise.
- Biosecurity Queensland provides advice on the use of toxins and is currently conducting a comprehensive review of the Queensland barrier fences, including the Wild Dog Barrier Fence.
- Biosecurity science research continues to evaluate new toxins and control tools for wild dogs as well as investigating the use of guardian dogs.

In addition to these initiatives, the Leading Sheep program, managed by industry development staff within the Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation has identified wild dogs as a key threat to the sheep industry. The links established by this program with producers have already provided benefits to Biosecurity Queensland staff as they promote strategic wild dog control and staff from the two areas will continue to strengthen the links.

These initiatives provide an excellent platform to assist landowners and local governments manage the adverse impacts of wild dogs across the state.