

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 1453

asked on Tuesday, 30 August 2016

MR KATTER ASKED THE MINISTER FOR STATE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER FOR NATURAL RESOURCES AND MINES (HON DR A LYNHAM)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the extreme pressures on the finances of western Queensland primary producers—

Will the Minister consider incentives on land rent for those drought affected producers who are spending a proportion of their income on noxious weeds such as prickly acacia and rubber vine that is well above industry or district standards?

ANSWER:

The Palaszczuk Government's 2016-17 State Budget invests heavily in supporting drought-affected land holders and the rural sector, as they battle through the fourth consecutive year of severe drought. The government is delivering a \$41.9 million whole-of-government drought assistance package in 2016-17 to support drought-affected communities.

The Department of Natural Resources and Mines is delivering \$4.2 million of this package by:

- providing an 11.5 per cent rent rebate to Category 11 tenures (primary production and grazing) in drought-declared areas; returning an estimated \$3.2 million in rent to more than 4530 eligible leaseholders; and
- waiving the annual water licence fee for approximately 12,820 water licence holders in drought-declared areas. The collective saving to the water licence holders for 2016–17 is \$1 million.

As an additional benefit, the department is also:

- deferring rural rent payments for all category 11 primary production and grazing leases in drought-declared areas until 30 June 2017; and
- waiving water licence application fees for new applications seeking licences to take water for stock and domestic purposes in drought-affected areas until 30 June 2017.

The department has also distributed more than \$3 million of Natural Resource Management (NRM) Investment Program grants to support the control of prickly acacia, rubber vine and other invasive weeds in western Queensland. These grants are delivered to NRM regional bodies that work with landholders to address major infestations of weeds, and to provide a range of support that can include technical advice and/or labour and or financial assistance for the purchase of herbicides.