

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 1780

Asked on 12 October 2016

MR CRIPPS asked the Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries (HON L DONALDSON)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the Animal Ethics Committee within the Minister's department and the decision it made on 30 May 2016 in relation to the management of goats on Pelorus Island—

Will the Minister advise (a) whether she supports the Committee making independent decisions relating to research and management activities involving the use of animals, (b) the implications of any outside interference in the Committee's independent decisions and (c) whether she supports the Committee's decision in relation to the Pelorus Island Project?

ANSWER: [Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Economic Development (Hon Bill Byrne)]

I thank the Member for the question.

- (a) I am pleased there is a process in Queensland that allows an Animal Ethics Committee to make independent decisions relating to the use of animals for scientific purposes. These committees are required by legislation to include veterinarians, scientists, members from welfare organisations and members from the general public. The inclusion of the different groups is to ensure all views are considered in the decision making by a committee. The legislation also states that 'the ultimate decision regarding the ethical acceptability of an activity lies with the AEC and must not be overridden'. The community has demanded this independence from interference and I accept and support this concept.
- (b) There has been no interference in the Committee's independent decisions. There is a requirement for independence of the Committee decisions in the legislation and we have strictly adhered to this condition. Removing the dingoes from Pelorus Island does not change or influence the original decision of the Committee.
- (c) I support the independence of the Committee's decision. I do not support the use of dingoes to remove goats but I do not interfere in the decision making of the Committee.