

Question on Notice

No. 1274

Asked on Wednesday, 19 September 2018

MR D CRISAFULLI ASKED THE MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF, MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND MINISTER FOR THE ARTS (HON L ENOCH)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the current regulatory enforcement of nutrient run-off from agricultural production within the reef catchments—

Will the Minister provide (a) the total number of (i) properties and hectares considered to be within the regulatory footprint and (ii) enforcement activities undertaken by the State Government (reported separately for 2015-16, 2016-17 and 2017-18) and (b) a breakdown of (a)(i) and (ii) by number of properties and hectare allocation for each industry (cane, grazing, horticulture, dairy etc.)?

ANSWER:

I thank the Honourable Member for the question.

The Department of Environment and Science's (the department) reef compliance program, targets fertiliser application requirements on cane farms in the Mackay Whitsunday, Burdekin Dry Tropics and Wet Tropics catchments.

Because the regulations were not enforced under the previous LNP Government, we now have to make up for those years of inaction. Protecting the Great Barrier Reef is a key Advancing Queensland Priority for the Palaszczuk Government. That is why we have invested a record \$330 million in protecting this natural asset.

The department is taking a multi-pronged approach to working with farmers to reduce pollutant run-off. To date the program has been focussed on the communication and education end of the compliance spectrum to ensure growers are aware of and understand their legal requirements. Where instances of ongoing non-compliance are identified, the department will respond in accordance with the departmental enforcement guidelines. The department will be ramping up its efforts and following up on non-compliant growers this financial year.

Approximately 3,908 cane farming properties and grazing properties covering over 12 million hectares are considered to be within the regulatory footprint. Other agricultural activities such as bananas, horticulture and grains are not currently regulated as agricultural environmentally relevant activities under the *Environmental Protection Act 1994*.

Around 485 compliance activities for cane growing have been undertaken over the previous three financial years.