

Question on Notice

No. 43

Asked on Tuesday, 23 February 2021

MR C BOYCE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF AND MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND YOUTH AFFAIRS (HON M SCANLON)—

QUESTION:

Will the Minister advise, before 1 December 2021, how the Minister will guarantee that every individual grazier in the Fitzroy Basin is fully informed of the obligations thrust upon them by the reef protection regulations in the Great Barrier Reef regions?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for the question.

The Queensland Government is committed to ensuring graziers understand what they need to do to comply with the new Reef protection regulations and is actively informing them and making support available.

The Reef regulations proposal was first publicly discussed in December 2015 in the release of the Great Barrier Reef Water Science Taskforce Interim Report for public consultation. Since then, the Reef Regulations have been publicly communicated in:

- May 2016 – the Great Barrier Reef Water Science Taskforce’s Final Report, ‘Clean water for a healthy reef’;
- August 2016 – the Queensland Government’s response to the Taskforce’s Final Report;
- March 2017 – public discussion paper, ‘Enhancing regulations to ensure clean water for a healthy Great Barrier Reef and a prosperous Queensland’;
- September 2017 – ‘Broadening and enhancing Reef protection regulations Consultation Regulatory Impact Statement’; and
- February 2019 – ‘Broadening and enhancing Reef protection regulations Decision Regulatory Impact Statement’ and introduction of the Environmental Protection (Great Barrier Reef Protection Measures) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019 into the Queensland Parliament.

All of these milestones were supported by consultation activities.

Since 2019, the Department of Environment and Science has used the following mechanisms to ensure graziers in the Fitzroy Basin are continuously informed and updated by:

- information being made available through radio and print advertising, peak group newsletters and Government websites, including publishing detailed web content on the Queensland Government website at www.qld.gov.au/ReefRegulations;
- face to face information sessions being convened with agricultural advisers and land holders in Rockhampton (December 2019) and in Biloela and Emerald (March 2020 and February 2021);

- peak industry groups being engaged on the regulations including AgForce, Queensland Farmers Federation and Natural Resource Management bodies;
- assistance being provided through Queensland Government funded programs including the Grazing Resilience and Sustainable Solutions program, known as GRASS, and the Grassroots Project; and
- information being made available at various events including the Rockhampton Landholder Expo.

The department will increase activities in the Fitzroy Basin in the lead up to minimum practice agricultural standards coming into effect on 1 December 2021. Activities will include:

- direct advertising using Government websites, radio, print and peak groups such as the Fitzroy Basin Association, AgForce and Meat and Livestock Australia;
- attendance at Beef 2021 in Rockhampton in May 2021 and Ag Grow Emerald in June 2021;
- one-on-one engagement with Fitzroy agricultural advisers through in-person meetings, webinars and telephone calls from July 2021;
- face to face information sessions in key locations such as Rockhampton, Biloela and Emerald; and
- presentations at other suitable industry meetings, workshops, events and field days in the Fitzroy Basin.

Some of these planned face to face activities may be subject to COVID-19 restrictions.

Graziers in the Fitzroy Basin may also register their interest in attending future information sessions by emailing the department at officeofthegbr@des.qld.gov.au.