

Question on Notice

No. 748

Asked on 15 June 2021

MRS D FRECKLINGTON ASKED MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT AND FISHERIES AND MINISTER FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES (HON M FURNER)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the National Red Imported Fire Ant Eradication Program and the inclusion of Clarendon in Fire Ant Biosecurity Zone 1 from 7 June 2021— Will the Minister provide (a) the number of information workshops and field days held with primary producers as of 7 June 2021, to inform them of the changes, (b) how many face-to-face meetings were held with primary producers (prior to 7 June), (c) was there information sent via post to primary producers advising them of the impending changes, (d) what notice or other initiatives were undertaken to inform Clarendon primary producers of the changes and (e) what compensation is being offered to primary producers who have been informed they cannot sell or move their baled hay due to their inclusion in Zone 1?

ANSWER:

- (a) and (b) The National Fire Ant Eradication Program (the Program) is a nationally cost-shared program funded by all Australian state and territory governments, and the Federal Government. The Queensland Government's funding contribution is 10 per cent. The Program is governed strategically and operationally by a national steering committee and independent chair, who works with Biosecurity Queensland to deliver the Program on behalf of the other jurisdictions.

The movement controls for high-risk fire ant carriers (including hay) that apply to primary producers in Clarendon have not changed since 27 May 2020.

Four events were held with primary producers to inform them of zone changes and associated biosecurity regulations: a Somerset Region Industry Forum (December 2019), a Hay Industry Collaboration Group Meeting (December 2020), a Hay Industry Field Day (May 2021) and a Webinar (7 June 2021).

- (c) As per normal protocol, the fire ant biosecurity zones changes were communicated through website content, face-to-face events, email notifications, stakeholder networks, social media, newsletter articles and a webinar.
- (d) See (b) and (c) above.
- (e) Hay producers within a fire ant biosecurity zone can sell or move their baled hay provided they implement the required fire ant risk mitigations contained in the *Biosecurity Regulation 2016*. Non-compliant hay cannot be moved off the property, but can still be used on the property.

There is no compensation for individuals for costs associated with complying with their obligations under the *Biosecurity Act 2014*.