

Question on Notice

No. 373

Asked on 10 May 2022

MR R MOLHOEK ASKED MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT AND FISHERIES AND MINISTER FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES (HON M FURNER)—

QUESTION:

Will the Minister advise the number of (a) stock inspectors and (b) large animal vets employed by DAF (reported separately by FTE staff year 2015 to present, and the region where they are based)?

ANSWER:

Significant investment has been made over the last decade to provide systems which amplify the efforts of staff by building the capacity of Queensland's biosecurity system for both prevention and preparedness including:

- Queensland implemented a Foot-and-Mouth Disease Preparedness Program – this work is being further expanded based on the current threat in Indonesia.
- To address the threat that African swine fever, the Palaszczuk Government has dedicated \$8.25 million over four years to the prevention of, and preparedness for, this disease.
- Industry capability and capacity is essential in prevention and preparedness for emergency animal diseases. Biosecurity Queensland has stood up industry and government taskforce groups focused on emerging animal disease preparedness. The pig industry taskforce, which was initially focused on African swine fever, has proven highly successful in the more recent Japanese encephalitis virus response. A cattle industry taskforce has also been stood up to focus on foot-and-mouth disease and lumpy skin disease.
- Biosecurity Queensland has built an Emergency Response Preparedness Team to build biosecurity incident response capabilities not only within Queensland Government, but across the biosecurity system, including industry. The team delivers biosecurity emergency response training, resources and scenario-based exercises focused on increasing Queensland's ability to respond to outbreaks.
- The Biosecurity Online Resources and Information System has also been developed to provide a platform for management of biosecurity information and spatial data across state and local government, land management agencies, environment groups and industry.
- Improved data and technology and access to tools such as drones have also improved preparedness and response capability considerably.

The investment into biosecurity as a system means that biosecurity staff, the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries and other government organisation (local, State and Federal), land management and environment groups and the private sector have significantly more capacity and capability to meet biosecurity challenges.

Stock inspectors have now been reclassified as Animal Welfare and Biosecurity inspectors and are further defined as vet staff or operational staff. There are five (5) vacant positions currently being progressed for permanent recruitment.

The number of staff engaged by Biosecurity Queensland fluctuates in conjunction with various projects and initiatives being undertaken and, since 2015, Biosecurity Queensland has invested additional resources in building our preparedness and response capability.

ABW Field Vet Staff								
	26/06/2015	24/06/2016	23/06/2017	22/06/2018	21/06/2019	19/06/2020	2/07/2021	30/05/2022
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Total	7.6	10	8.6	8.6	7.6	7.8	6.1	6.3
Central	2	3	3	3	2	2.8	1.4	1.3
North	1.6	2.6	1.6	1.6	2	1	2	3
South (incl SouthEast zone)	4	4.4	4	4	3.6	4	2.7	2
ABW Operations staff (excluding vets)								
	26/06/2015	24/06/2016	23/06/2017	22/06/2018	21/06/2019	19/06/2020	2/07/2021	30/05/2022
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Total	56.5	52.6	51.42	51.79	48.49	51.52	47.92	44.8
Central	12	12	13	12	12	14	9	9
North	13	12	10	12	11.83	10	9	9
South (incl SouthEast zone)	31.5	28.6	28.42	27.79	24.66	27.52	29.92	26.8