

Question on Notice

No. 515

Asked on 25 May 2022

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

QUESTION:

With reference to the management of cattle tick zones— Will the Minister clarify, in the period 2018 to 2022 how many (a) property owners within the cattle tick free zone have been subject to operation under an 'approved program' due to tick outbreaks in this zone and (b) individuals and businesses have been fined or prosecuted under the biosecurity regulation for tick related offences?

ANSWER:

The cattle tick line was established in its current position following the introduction of the *Biosecurity Act 2014* (the Act) on 1 July 2016 and was reviewed again in 2019.

The tick line has been positioned to provide a sustainable and cost-effective cattle tick free zone, minimise the occurrence of cattle tick infestations and promote a genuinely cattle tick free zone. While a small number of cattle tick-infested properties will continue to emerge in the free zone, the infestations are not unexpected. The numbers of properties impacted in recent times are consistent with the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries' data collected over many years.

Generally, the cattle tick free-zone infestations occur in areas close to the tick line where environmental conditions are more suitable for cattle tick survival. The number of properties is influenced by seasonal conditions. After two good wet seasons in a row in these high-risk areas, a small increase in the number of infested properties has been recorded this year.

Unlike the previous *Stock Act 1915*, the current *Biosecurity Act 2014* does not provide for the use of 'approved programs' to manage tick infestations. All infested properties in the cattle tick free zone are investigated and movement controls applied. Biosecurity Queensland inspectors assist the owners of these properties manage the infestation and ensure an eradication program is undertaken.

As of 27 May 2022, there are 155 tick infested properties identified in the cattle tick free zone.

Since 2018, one company and one individual have been prosecuted for cattle tick-related breaches of Queensland biosecurity laws.