

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
Question on notice

12 JUN 2012

Tuesday, 1 May 2012

5448. Hon Robin Chapple to the Minister for Child Protection representing the Minister for Agriculture and Food.

I refer to the former Agriculture Protection Board (APB) herbicide workers and compensation for former workers with cancer conditions who were exposed to 2,4,5-T, and ask -

- (1) How many former APB workers have received compensation payments for cancer-related claims?
- (2) How many former APB workers have received compensation payments for non-cancer related claims?
- (3) How many workers with cancer related conditions submitted claims, and when was the last claim submitted?
- (4) How many workers with non-cancer related conditions submitted claims, and when was the last claim submitted?
- (5) How many of the 90 APB workers identified in Dr Andrew Harper's report have contracted cancer since 2004?
- (6) How many of the 90 APB workers identified in Dr Andrew Harper's report have died of cancer related illnesses since 2004?
- (7) Are the identified herbicide workers still being provided with specialised health care service?
- (8) Is the Government still monitoring the health of the former APB workers?
- (9) If no to (8), why not?
- (10) If yes to (8) -
 - (a) who is doing this;
 - (b) where and how is it being done; and
 - (c) how often is the monitoring being carried out?
- (11) Is the nurse support and liaison service, that was established in 2004 to provide counselling and advice to ex-APB workers and their families, still operating?
- (12) If no to (11), why not?

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(13) If yes to (11) -

(a) where is this service operating; and

(b) who can access this service?

(14) How many former APB workers or relatives of deceased workers have proceeded with compensation claims specifically for cancer-related and non-cancer related claims?

(15) How many former APB workers or relatives of deceased workers are WorkCover Western Australia officials still assisting with cancer-related and non-cancer related claims?

(16) How many former APB workers are in negotiations over cancer-related and non-cancer related claims?

Answer

(1) 8

(2) Nil

(3) 26 claims, with the last claim submitted on 8 June 2010.

(4) 45 claims, with the last claim submitted on 17 January 2011.

(5)-(6) The process of compensating former APB workers for cancer extended to all APB workers involved in weed spraying programs who were exposed to 2,4,5-T and not just the 90 APB workers initially surveyed by Dr Harper. There have been 23 cancer related claims since 2004. In four of these claims the claimant has died since 2004. However, the time cancer was contracted for a number of claimants would have pre-dated 2004.

(7) The identified herbicide workers are still being provided with health care and are referred on for specialist care as appropriate.

(8)-(9) The expert medical panel led by Prof Armstrong in 2003, which conducted the Kimberley Chemical Use Review, did not recommend monitoring programs for former APB workers, as they were not likely to be helpful in reducing mortality. The Government supported this recommendation and there has been no monitoring programs put in place.

(10) Not applicable

(11) There is ongoing nurse support to provide counselling and advice to ex-APB workers and their families. The same contact point and person are still available. Formal additional funding ceased in June 2010 due to the low level of enquiry and follow up work required. However the matter will be kept under review.

(12) Not applicable

(13)(a) The service is based in Derby. Visits to other regional centres have been made as required to assist former APB workers and their families.

(b) The service is available to former APB workers and their families who have had health concerns arising from possible exposure to herbicides used in weed spraying.

(14) 71

(15) All former APB workers and or relatives of deceased workers can access information and assistance on making a workers' compensation claim from WorkCover WA's Advisory Services area.

(16) One