

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Question on notice

Tuesday, 13 October 2015

3446. Hon Robin Chappie to the Minister for Housing representing the Minister for Lands.

I refer to pastoral stations in the Kimberley, and I ask:

- (a) how many have management plans that detail how environmental values are to be protected;
- (b) how does the Department of Lands assess whether pastoral leases are ecologically sustainable, in compliance with the requirements of the *Land Administration Act 1997*;
- (c) what principles does the Department of Lands use to determine whether a pastoral lease is operating in an ecologically sustainable manner; and
- (d) what action is taken when the department finds a pastoral lease is not operating on an ecologically sustainable basis?

Answer

- (a) Seven.
- (b) The Department of Lands (DoL) does not assess whether pastoral leases are ecologically sustainable. The role of the Department of Lands is to provide administrative support to the Pastoral Lands Board (PLB) to fulfil its functions in the administration of pastoral leases.

One of the functions of the PLB is to ensure that pastoral leases are managed on an ecologically sustainable basis and that pastoral lessees use methods of best pastoral land management practice, appropriate to the area where the land is situated.

The Department of Agriculture and Food assesses the condition of rangeland on pastoral leases on behalf of the PLB, and the PLB uses these assessments to determine if lessees are complying with their rangeland management requirements.

- (c) It is not the role of DoL role to determine whether pastoral leases are operating in an ecologically sustainable manner.

The PLB's Rangeland Management Compliance Policy and Procedures states that that lessees must use methods of best pastoral and environmental management practice, appropriate to the area where the land is situated, for the management of stock and for the management, conservation and regeneration of pasture for grazing; the maintenance of indigenous pasture and other vegetation on the land

under the lease, for present and future use, and in the interest of the State of Western Australia.

- (d) The PLB, supported by DoL, takes the following action when rangeland management issues are identified on a lease:
 - i. Works proactively with the lessee to address the identified rangeland management issues;
 - ii. If no satisfactory progress is made in addressing the issue, then a written warning is provided, referred to as a "Breach Advice", outlining the actions the lessee can take to address the issues;
 - iii. If still no satisfactory progress is made to address the issues, then the Pastoral Lands Board may issue a Default Notice requiring the lessee to address the issue; and
 - iv. Failure to comply with a Default Notice is an offence that attracts penalties including fines, forfeiture or both.