

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
Question Without Notice

Thursday, 14 February 2019

C067. Hon Robin Chapple to the Minister for Agriculture and Food

I refer to the recent cattle deaths reported to have occurred on Kangan Station and at Yandeyarra Reserve, two Questions without Notice asked in the Legislative Council on Tuesday, 12 February 2019 on this issue and Question Without Notice No. 30 asked in the Legislative Council on 18 February 2015 and I ask:

1. Given that the issue of poor animal husbandry was raised with Department of Indigenous Affairs in 2012 by concerned traditional owners and subsequently raised by myself in 2015 to the Minister for Lands with associated photos of cattle deaths, what oversight was put in place to ensure respectable animal husbandry was established?
2. Was a plan, direction or reprimand given?
3. If yes to (2), will the minister table the documents?
4. If no to (2) and/or (3) why not?
5. At the time of the original reports in 2012 and 2015 what action did the relevant department with oversight of pastoral activities take at that time?
6. With reference to (5), if no action was taken why not?

Answer

1. In 2012, the then Department of Indigenous Affairs (DIA) was made aware of concerns regarding animal welfare at Yandeyarra Reserves. These were referred to the then Department of Agriculture and Food WA (DAFWA) for investigation. The then Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia became aware of a cattle welfare incident at Pinga Creek (Yandeyarra) in 24 October 2012. The Livestock Compliance Unit (LCU) contacted the Management of Yandeyarra and made recommendations about management of cattle including humane destruction of animals that were suffering.

2. On 8 November 2012 three Direction Notices were sent to the Chief Executive Officer, Mugarinya Community, South Hedland, by the LCU. These Direction Notices required Mugarinya to check the welfare of cattle at or near Pinga Creek bridge twice weekly; to provide cattle with proper and sufficient water and as appropriate veterinary treatment or euthanasia. The LCU and DAFWA staff in the region followed up on matters covered by the Direction Notices. 23 January 2013, the case was closed as there had been no further complaints of cattle perishing at Pinga Creek (Yandeyarra).

3. No.

4. DPIRD does not provide copies of Direction Notices to parties other than the recipient.

5. Between 2012 and 2015 the Pilbara Indigenous Landholder Services (PILS), a collaboration between the Indigenous Landholder Corporation (ILC) and the then DAFWA supported Pilbara Aboriginal pastoral leases with economic development, property planning, regulation and compliance matters. PILS successfully facilitated a funding agreement between BHP and Mugarunya Community for the establishment of a pastoral manager for their lands. The reserve was actively managed with improvements and maintenance being made to infrastructure, roads, animal biosecurity and rangelands management. Recent animal welfare incidents at Nookanbah and Yandeyarra have occurred following the departure of senior leadership from those pastoral operations.

6. Not applicable.

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