

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
Question On Notice

Tuesday, 13 August 2019

2378. Hon Robin Chappie to the Minister for Regional Development

I refer to the Ord River Irrigation Area (ORIA), and I ask:

- (a) how many hectares of land, in total, have been cleared for the irrigation scheme;
- (b) how many hectares of land, in total, are expected to be cleared by the completion of the scheme;
- (c) what area of land is allocated for irrigation in Ord Stage 1;
- (d) what area of land has been cleared for Ord Stage 2;
- (e) what area of land was originally allocated for Ord Stage 2;
- (f) what area of land was found to be unsuitable for Ord Stage 2 after detailed investigations were carried out;
- (g) what areas of land in the ORIA are leasehold and freehold:
 - (i) which individual or group holds the lease;
 - (ii) how much does the leaseholder pay per hectare; and
 - (iii) which individual or group owns the land referred to in (g) as a freehold;
- (h) what area of land in the ORIA belongs to the Miriwung-Gajerrong Traditional Owners;
- (i) in the past year, how many hectares of land within the ORIA have had crops grown on them;
- (j) in the past year, how many hectares of land have been left fallow or remained untouched;
- (k) what crops were grown in the ORIA over the past year:
 - (i) would the Minister table the information in (k), including total area per crop; and
 - (ii) if no to (i), why not;
- (l) would the Minister table the total yields, per crop type, for the ORIA over the last year;
- (m) if no to (l), why not;
- (n) what area of land was used to grow cotton in the ORIA over the last year:
 - (i) what was the yield of cotton (as product, by mass), in the ORIA for this time period;
 - (ii) will the Minister provide information regarding quality grading of this cotton and the amounts (mass) per grade;
 - (iii) where was this cotton (as product) processed;
 - (iv) is this cotton species considered a product of recombinant DNA technology (or other laboratory-based technique); and
 - (v) if yes to (iv), by what name is this cotton known; and
- (o) how many people are directly employed in agriculture in the ORIA:
 - (i) of these, how many are international visa-holders; and
 - (ii) will the Minister table a breakdown of number of people per visa type, for those individuals in (i)?

Answer

- a. 22,340 hectares
- b. 57,000 hectares
- c. 15,000 hectares
- d. 7,340 hectares of irrigated farm lots
- e. Total approved development of 9,375 hectares, being 7,900 for irrigated farms lots, 1260 hectares for associated infrastructure and 115 hectares for sourcing road building materials.
- f. 370 hectares Vegetation Management Lot. *420 hectares deferred clearing lots that can potentially be developed in future.*
- g. 15,675 hectares freehold, 6,665 hectares leasehold, *420 hectares future leasehold*
 - i 6,665 hectares (Goomig) Development Lease to Kimberley Agricultural Investment Pty Ltd
 - ii Development Lease at \$1.10 per annum (*for 6,665 hectares*)
 - iii Miriuwung Gajerrong Corporation is in the process of acquiring 675 hectares of the Goomig Development as benefits under the Ord Final Agreement, 15,000 hectares in Ord Stage One is freehold to multiple entities.
- h. 675 hectares in Goomig
- i. 17,100 hectares
- j. 2,000 hectares (Ord Stage 1) fallow, 3,240 hectares Goomig under development
- k. Cotton, corn, sorghum, chick peas, quinoa, safflower, sunflowers, mung beans, sesame, millet, borlotti beans, cannellini beans, navy bean, mangos, paw paws, bananas, pumpkins, melons, and sandalwood
 - i No
 - ii This information is not currently collated by the Department.
- l. No
- m. This information is not currently collated by the Department
- n. 300 hectares of trials
 - i Trials results are indicating good yields for cotton grown in Ord
 - ii Quality is reported as consistently high / very high

iii Queensland

iv Yes. Cotton has Bollgard 3 technology.

v The cotton grown is commonly known as American or upland cotton.

Varieties are bred in Australia by CSIRO called Sicot748B3F, Sicot714B3F, Sicot746B3F, Sicot707B3F.

o. This information is not currently collated by the Department however it is estimated that Agriculture in the ORIA employs in the order of 400 people. Seasonal cropping and harvesting requirements in the ORIA requires a short term labour workforce which is met by seasonal workers including overseas international visa holders.

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