

DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT — ANIMAL WELFARE BRANCH

2397. Hon Lynn MacLaren to the Minister for Energy representing the Minister for Local Government
- (1) How many full time staff are currently working within the Animal Welfare Branch, within Department of Local Government, to enforce the *Animal Welfare Act 2002* across Western Australia?
  - (2) How many General Inspectors from other Agencies, the police force, and the non-profit sector (including the RSPCA) have been appointed under your Department to help enforce the Act?
  - (3) Do General Inspectors have enforcement powers?
  - (4) How do General Inspectors currently act on complaints received by the public?
  - (5) Does the Department provide any external funding to Agencies or Organisations that have appointed General Inspectors?
  - (6) In relation to the live sheep export trade, could the Minister outline how many inspections have been conducted at feedlots, sale yards and the Port of Fremantle to ensure that the animal welfare standards are achieved, by both the Animal Welfare Branch and by General Inspectors, during the following years —
    - (a) 2000;
    - (b) 2001;
    - (c) 2002;
    - (d) 2003;
    - (e) 2004;
    - (f) 2005;
    - (g) 2006;
    - (h) 2007;
    - (i) 2008;
    - (j) 2009 and
    - (k) 2010?
  - (7) How are these inspections recorded?
  - (8) How many complaints of animal cruelty relating to the welfare of livestock at these aggregation points has the Animal Welfare Branch received, years —
    - (a) 2000;
    - (b) 2001;
    - (c) 2002;
    - (d) 2003;
    - (e) 2004;
    - (f) 2005;
    - (g) 2006;
    - (h) 2007;
    - (i) 2008;
    - (j) 2009; and
    - (k) 2010?
  - (9) How many is it currently investigating?
  - (10) How many to date have resulted in prosecution or fines?

Hon PETER COLLIER replied:

- (1) Four.

The Animal Welfare Branch has an establishment of four FTE that includes provision appointment of three General Inspectors. Currently, three officers are appointed as General Inspectors; however one is on extended leave. The person acting in this position is not an appointed General Inspector.

- (2) There are 210 general inspectors with various agencies in WA:
- eight with the Department of Agriculture and Food;
  - 22 with the Department of Environment and Conservation;
  - three with the Department of Local Government;
  - two with KB Paws (Kalgoorlie);
  - 157 with local governments; and
  - 18 with the RSPCA.
- In addition to this, all WA Police are "automatically" empowered as General Inspectors and do not need to be appointed.
- (3) Yes, General Inspectors have enforcement powers.
- (4) Complaints by the public are referred to the appropriate agency for handling via the Department of Local Government's Animal Welfare Branch, in accordance with the Animal Welfare Incident Action Plan, developed in 2007. The General Inspector responds according to protocols established by their employing body, and in accordance with the provisions of the Animal Welfare Act 2002.
- (5) The Government provides \$250,000 to the RSPCA annually.
- (6) (a)-(h) The Liberal National Government came to office on 23 September 2008 and, as such, cannot provide answers for previous Government administrations.
- (i)-(k) The Department of Local Government is compiling a history of inspections at feedlots, saleyards and the Port of Fremantle. That information is presently not available years 2008, 2009 and 2010.
- (7) When attending a place of interest to conduct an inspection, General Inspectors are encouraged to use a template of a "Running Sheet". This allows for information to be recorded in a consistent manner. Details include the names of feedlots or ships being inspected, start and finish times for each event occurring during an inspection, observations made by the inspector and what actions were taken.
- (8) (a)-(h) The Liberal National Government came to office on 23 September 2008 and, as such, cannot provide answers for previous Government administrations.
- (i)-(k) The Department of Local Government is compiling a history of complaints received, details of investigations conducted, and their outcomes. That information is presently not available years 2008, 2009 and 2010.
- (9) There are currently four investigations being undertaken into the welfare of livestock at places such as feedlots, saleyards and the Port of Fremantle.
- (10) See 8 (i)-(k).