

## Agriculture and Western NSW – Responses to Supplementary Questions

*Hearing: Monday 2 March 2020*

Question number	Question	Response
	<b>Maintenance of TSR boundary fences</b>	
1	1. Considering that Travelling Stock Routes, or TSRs, are often used to graze stock by permit on payment of fees, will consideration be given to directing proceeds generated by Local Lands Services into maintaining property boundary fences adjoining the TSRs, which are subject to damage sustained through contact from animals grazing along the TSRs and therefore causing landholders to maintain the fence, which at present is, unfairly, the responsibility of the landholder?	<p>Travelling Stock Reserves (TSRs) are parcels of Crown land which were traditionally used for moving stock and grazing. They are now more widely recognised as also having important values for biodiversity conservation, indigenous culture and recreation as well as grazing. The TSRs are comprised of long, linear reserves as well as fragmented, isolated patches. This creates a network that has a disproportionately high length of boundary fence to reserve area ratio.</p> <p>Division 6 of the <i>Local Land Services Act 2013</i> (LLS Act) excludes the application of the <i>Dividing Fences Act 1991</i> to controlled TSRs that adjoin land owned by anyone other than Local Land Services (LLS), or where the adjoining land is separated from a controlled TSR by a road or watercourse. This exempts LLS from being required, under the <i>Dividing Fences Act 1991</i>, to contribute to the construction, replacement or maintenance of boundary fences adjoining controlled TSRs in the circumstances defined by the LLS Act.</p>
	<b>Recreational Fishing Advisory Council</b>	
2	2. Why are there 3 anglers with commercial fishing business on the Recreational Fishing Advisory Council, being Charter / Guides – is this representative in your view?	In addition to a dedicated Charter Boat Fishing representative on the council, all members have extensive knowledge and experience of the NSW recreational fishing sector, providing valuable input to the Advisory Council.
3	3. Did you as Minister meet your RFNSW Representatives at their first meeting last week and what did you tell them as part your introduction?	No, the meetings coincided with Parliamentary sitting days.
4	4. What direction did you give them with regards to the Cockle Issues at Lake Illawarra as you indicated you would?	<p>The Advisory Committee was asked to consider the appropriateness of the existing bag limit for cockles noting the following:</p> <p>The recent recreational take of Cockles has increased significantly in Lake Illawarra consistent with compliance</p>

		<p>reports. Commercial fishing take has remained relatively stable in recent years.</p> <p>The current bag limit of 50 Cockles per day is enabling the collection of large quantities of Cockles by groups of recreational fishers and is facilitating increasing black marketing opportunities.</p> <p>Current increased harvest rates by recreational fishers are likely to result in localised depletions of Cockles in the absence of any management action.</p>
5	5. What rules / guidelines and charter do all these representatives have to follow and are they classed as NSW Government employees?	The relevant Code of Conduct and Charter for Recreational Fishing NSW Advisory Council members outlines the roles and responsibilities of members. Members of Council are on-boarded onto the Department's financial system to enable payment of member entitlements.
6	6. How and what are they paid?	RFNSW members receive a remuneration of \$2,500 per annum as a stipend to cover sitting fees in accordance with the Classification and Remuneration Framework for NSW Boards and Committees.
7	7. How do you deal with complaints against their behaviour, say on social media and their comments that may or may not fit within the rules / guidelines or charter?	The Department responds to complaints on a case by case basis and may take action for any breaches of the Code of Conduct.
	<b>Commercial octopus</b>	
8	8. Can you advise exactly how consultation with the Recreational sector occurred and how they were advised as part of the Octopus consultative process?	A stakeholder consultation paper was published on the Department's website on 25 September 2019 and submissions closed 4 November 2019. The consultation paper was also sent directly to 143 recreational fishing clubs by email and an additional 326 clubs by hardcopy mail where there was no email address available.
	<b>Cruise ship terminal</b>	
9	9. Recreational anglers stand to lose a huge amount of safe fishing access in Yarra Bay, especially families with small boats. What alternatives can you suggest if and when a new Cruise Ship Terminal is built?	No decision has been made with regard to the development of a Cruise Ship Terminal at Yarra Bay.
10	10. What processes are in place if and when the Cruise Ship Terminal is built to compensate the recreational fishers of the Botany Bay Recreational Fishing Haven.	No decision has been made with regard to the development of a Cruise Ship Terminal at Yarra Bay.
11	11. Are these Havens protected under Legislation?	The recreational fishing havens are areas designated under Schedule 2 of the Fisheries Management (General) Regulation 2019 as waters protected from commercial fishing.

	<b>Data sharing of trust funded projects</b>	
12	<p>12. Recent comments overheard at boat ramps by anglers indicate that some anglers are not willing to hand over tagging data with regards to billfish in the fear of it being misused by NSW DPI.</p> <p>(a) What guarantees do anglers have that their data is being shared in a sensible manner?</p> <p>(b) Do recreational fishermen have any oversight on where data paid for by the Trust Fund can be used and shared?</p>	<p>Data collected as part of the Gamefish Tagging Program is shared in accordance with the data licence provisions in agreements between DPI and the relevant scientific organisations and government agencies that usually request access to specific program data. Summary data is also presented in an Annual Report which is published annually on the DPI website.</p>
	<b>Mulloway Recovery Plan</b>	
13	<p>13. Mulloway has been classified as Overfished in NSW since 2004/05 and a Recovery Program (RP) to assist the stock to rebuild was implemented on the 1 November 2013. The goal of the mulloway recovery program was to increase the spawning stock size of mulloway by reducing fishing mortality on both the adult and juvenile parts of the stock.</p> <p>(a) Can you provide the most current update that determines if the spawning stock of the Mulloway is improving?</p> <p>(b) Can you advise of all the current research projects undertaken or underway with regards to Mulloway in NSW since the reduction of the bag limit down to 1 fish over 70cm? (excluding the Research Angler Program)</p> <p>(c) How do you, as Minister gauge if bag and size limits changes work with regards to Mulloway in NSW?</p> <p>(d) In general, how do you, as Minister gauge if bag and size limits changes work with regards to all recreationally caught species in NSW?</p>	<p>a) An assessment on the spawning stock of Mulloway was published in 2018 and is available through the national Status of Australian Fish Stocks website (<a href="http://www.fish.gov.au">www.fish.gov.au</a>). That assessment indicated no identifiable improvement in the spawning stock biomass. The Mulloway assessment will be updated for the 2020 iteration of the Status of Australian Fish Stocks.</p> <p>b) Since the reduction in the recreational bag limit for Mulloway to 1 fish over 70 cm in September 2018 the following projects have been undertaken or are underway:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commercial Fisheries Port Monitoring Program 2019-2022 - Monitoring of commercial harvest at ports of landing for size, age and species composition to support stock assessment and commercial fisheries management.</li> <li>Integrated Monitoring Program 2019-2022 - survey of recreational fishing in NSW/ACT.</li> <li>FRDC2016/020 The role of spatial protection measures in mitigating effects of bycatch and increasing yields in the NSW Ocean Trawl Fishery (funded by Fisheries Research and Development). This project is looking at abundance and size-structure of juvenile Mulloway in current inshore closure and non-closure areas, following floods in the northern rivers. The project is also examining connectivity of Mulloway between key estuaries and inshore areas, and the contribution of these different nurseries/areas to fish appearing in commercial and recreational fisheries</li> <li>Fisheries enhancement research and monitoring program – assessment of monitoring of marine stocking (NSW Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust). Addressing the science and monitoring aspects of the NSW Marine Stocking Fishery Management Strategy. The project will monitor any releases of juvenile Mulloway in NSW waters,</li> </ol>

		<p>should they occur during the term of the project (to date releases have focussed on other species).</p> <p>c) Through monitoring and undertaking regular stock assessments of Mulloway as part of a National Status of Australian Fish Stocks program, which includes commercial catch and effort data, and biennial recreational fishing data surveys</p> <p>d) Through monitoring and undertaking regular stock assessments as part of a National Status of Australian Fish Stocks program, which includes commercial catch and effort data, and biennial recreational fishing data surveys</p>
	<b>Kingfish in NSW</b>	
14	14. Can you advise all the current research projects underway with regards to Kingfish in NSW and who is completing them and who is funding? (excluding the Research Angler Program)	<p>a) Fisheries enhancement research and monitoring program –assessment of monitoring of marine stocking (NSW Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust). Addressing the science and monitoring aspects of the NSW Marine Stocking Fishery Management Strategy. The project will monitor any releases of juvenile Kingfish in NSW waters, should they occur during the term of the project (to date releases have focussed on other species).</p> <p>b) FRDC 2015-213 Enabling land-based production of juvenile yellowtail Kingfish in NSW (funded by Fisheries Research and Development). NSW DPI conducted a series of experiments and commercial-scale production to investigate the viability of producing advanced juvenile yellowtail kingfish (YTK, <i>Seriola lalandi</i>) at the Port Stephens Fisheries Institute during March 2016 - December 2018. Draft Final Report prepared.</p> <p>c) FRDC 2019-103 Strategic planning workshop for Yellowtail Kingfish stock assessment in South-eastern Australia. This project will collate and where necessary re-analyse data on the south-eastern Australian stock of Yellowtail Kingfish and to host a multi-jurisdictional workshop on required research and management needs.</p> <p>d) Commercial Fisheries Port Monitoring Program 2019-2022 - Monitoring of commercial harvest at ports of landing for size, age and species composition to support stock assessment and commercial fisheries management.</p> <p>e) Integrated Monitoring Program 2019-2022 - survey of recreational fishing in NSW/ACT.</p>

15	15. Can you list all the recreational bag and size limit changes with regards to Kingfish over the past 20 years in NSW?	The minimum legal length was changed from 60cm to 65cm in September 2007.
16	16. How do you, as Minister gauge if bag and size limits changes have worked with regards to Kingfish in NSW?	Through undertaking regular stock assessments of Kingfish as part of a National Status of Australian Fish Stocks program taking into account scientific data collected by monitoring projects and biennial surveys of the recreational fishery.
17	17. If we see a reduction in the recreational take of Kingfish via bag limits in NSW as previously advised by RFNSW, would you as Minister support the same rules applying to the Commercial sector, that's is a reduction in take for all sectors?	The issue of resource sharing is considered in consultation with the relevant Advisory Councils and the Ministerial Fisheries Advisory Council. The Government supports decisions being made in consultation with the relevant stakeholder groups, and based on the best available science.
18	18. If we see an increase in the legal size of Kingfish for recreational anglers in NSW as previously advised by RFNSW, would you as Minister support the same rules apply to the Commercial sector, that's is one size for all sectors?	The issue of size limits for particular species, including Kingfish is considered in consultation with the relevant Advisory Councils and the Ministerial Fisheries Advisory Council. The Government supports decisions being made in consultation with the relevant stakeholder groups, and based on the best available science.
19	19. Does NSW have a Harvest Strategy for NSW with regards to Kingfish and if so how long has it been going for?	<p>A harvest strategy policy is currently being developed for NSW Fisheries and will be released for public consultation once finalised. This policy, once adopted, will guide the development of individual fishery harvest strategies.</p> <p>The development of Harvest Strategies was discussed at the most recent Commercial and Recreational Fisheries Advisory Council meetings.</p> <p>The Seafood Industry Council included the development of harvest strategies in their strategic industry vision and road map document.</p> <p>Some sectors of the commercial fishing industry (i.e. lobster and pipi fishers) have been involved in the first steps of the development of Harvest Strategies for those fisheries.</p>
20	20. In a FRDC "Report on the Status of Australian Fish Stocks 2018 – NSW Stock status summary Yellowtail Kingfish (Seriola Lalandi)" there are scientific assumptions / quotes attributed NSW DPI and followed with (NSW DPI unpublished) data in this report, Do you consider this acceptable science or research?	Individual fisher level catch and effort data provided by the commercial sector is confidential, requiring data to be summarised All Departmental stock assessment and stock status summary reports are peer reviewed by experts, ensuring best practice and scientific rigour is maintained.

21	21. Can you provide the status of the DPI unpublished data, when it was commenced and expected completion?	The data used for the Kingfish Stock Status is commercial catch and effort data and size data collected from the fishing cooperatives. Collection of commercial and recreational fishing data is ongoing.
22	22. Do you agree that unpublished data cannot be critiqued, and no weight should be given to the claims made in the publication until such critique has been allowed for?	All Departmental stock assessment and stock status summary reports are peer reviewed by experts, ensuring best practice and scientific rigour is maintained.
<b>Marine Parks in NSW</b>		
23	23. With no announcement of any new marine parks in NSW after the disastrous announcement by your predecessor Niall Blair  (a) what is the position of the NSW Nationals, (b) The NSW Liberals (c) The Coalition in entirety with regards to the Hawkesbury Bioregion?	There are no plans to proceed with this marine park nor create any new marine park.
<b>NSW Recreational Fishing Trust</b>		
24	24. Can you advise of the total billable NSW DPI staff effort (that is the total amount attributed with daily timesheetings in total dollars) attributed to NSW Recreational Fishing Trust Funded Projects in 2017/2018 (Fresh and Salt)?	\$6,478,518.
25	25. Can you advise the overall salary costs for NSW DPI staff attributed to NSW Recreational Fishing Trust Funded Projects in 2017/2018 (Fresh and Salt)?	\$6,478,518.
26	26. Can you advise the total number of DPI employees who were paid for from Recreational Fishing Trust Funded Projects in 2017/2018 as determined from daily time sheeting amounts (Fresh and Salt)?	64 Full Time Equivalent Staff
27	27. With regards to the Saltwater Trust Access Project can you advise who was / were the DPI staffers employed to oversee the project in 2015/2016, 2016/2017, 2018/2019, 2019/2020?	2015/16: Brooke McCarthy, Jim Harnwell 2016/17: Brooke McCarthy, Jim Harnwell 2017/18: Brooke McCarthy 2018/19: Benjamin Black, Brooke McCarthy, Chris Cleaver 2019/20: Chris Cleaver
<b>Commercial Fishing</b>		

28	<p>28. Why did Minister Niall Blair state to GPSC5 that “ the government has also appointed a probity auditor to assess the entire subsidised share trading market and target assistance measures” when the probity report indicates that no probity was conducted on the targeted assistance, only the share market?</p> <p>(a) Do you consider that this constitutes as misleading the committee? (b) If not, why not?</p>	Comments made by the former Minister are a matter for the former Minister.
29	29. Why was no probity conducted on targeted assistance offered after the share trading scheme had been completed?	There was probity oversight of the targeted assistance.
30	<p>30. Why in a question by Hon Mick Vietch on the 13th March 2018 regarding the number of buyouts which Niall Blair responded to on 17th April 2018 did he state that 235 buy outs had occurred?, and then in October 2018 state 177 buyouts? (a) Given the evidence tabled in budget estimates on the 2/3/2020 from Mr Hansen states there was 216 buyouts? Why did the former Minister Niall Blair mislead the house?</p>	Comments made by the former Minister are a matter for the former Minister.
31	31. Given that evidence taken in estimates this year stated that who received targeted assistance was the decision of the minister of the day, who did the former minister Niall Blair seek consultation with before offering the targeted assistance?	The decision to offer targeted assistance was made in response to recommendations from the Parliamentary Inquiry, and the priority categories reflected the priorities of the Share Trading Market.

<p>32</p>	<p>32. Why were policies and procedures regarding probity not followed with regards to the Business adjustment program in particular</p> <p>(a) Engagement of the same probity practitioner on an ongoing basis?</p> <p>(b) Appointment of APAC probity advisory and auditor consultants at the same time owner Jason Masters was engaged as administrator of the Wentworth Park sporting complex, and administrator of Rookwood cemetery?</p>	<p>The probity practitioner was engaged in accordance with the Department of Primary Industries procurement policy and the appropriate checks were undertaken as a part of this process.</p>
<p>33</p>	<p>33. Why when asked in budget estimates in September 2017 by the Hon Mick Veitch about all probity advisors and auditors the department had engaged and appointed in the last 5 years did O'Connor Marsden not appear has being appointed either probity advisor or auditor for business adjustment program when decisions regarding appointments were announced in 2016.</p>	<p>O'Connor Marsden did not provide their audit report until January 2018. As such, finalised engagement dates and final remuneration were not available at the time of the Supplementary Question from the Hon Mick Veitch MLC.</p>
<p>34</p>	<p>34. Why did the probity auditor report fail to make mention that over 400 fishermen who attended training sessions in September 2016 were provided wrong and misleading information, with Department Senior Manager Doug Ferrell later blaming the trainer to fishermen stating "I do not know where she got the information from"</p>	<p>It is unclear what information is being referred to or what is being asked in this question.</p>
<p>35</p>	<p>35. Why did the probity auditor report fail to mention that the majority of mud crab shares sold before the market?</p>	<p>The trading of shares prior to the Subsidised Share Trading Market was outside the scope of the audit. Further, the Government has no control over what is included in the probity auditor report.</p>



36	<p>36. Why in the supreme court case of Elliott v Minister administering Fisheries Management Act 1994 [2018] was information pertaining to the share register redacted that showed that a significant portion of mud crab shares had been largely shifted to multiple fishing business owned by a small group of people hence artificially driving market prices up?</p> <p>(a) Why did NSW DPI and Rural Assistance Authority refuse to make documents available to the court for the above case?</p> <p>(b) Why was the court in the above case informed by Senior counsel for NSW Government that “the court didn’t need to be concerned about the market after the market”?</p>	<p>The Department provided all information and data that was relevant to the plaintiff’s case.</p> <p>Comments made by the Senior Counsel is a matter for the Senior Counsel.</p>
37	37. Why were the recommendations by Professor Barclay and Dr Tania King for a Socio-economic impact study to be completed prior to the reform ignored?	Professor Barclay is currently undertaking a socio-economic assessment.
38	38. Why wasn’t the activities of the Commercial fishing advisory council suspended during the share trading scheme?	CommFish NSW was only formed in 2017 and met for the first time on 26-27 May 2017, after the first two rounds of the Subsidised Share Trading Market had already been completed. It was an introductory meeting and did not discuss any issue related to the market.
39	39. Why was the Ministers office still communicating with the Commercial fishing advisory council during the share trading scheme who had commercial fishermen that were participating in the market at the time?	The Chair of CommFish NSW wrote to the Minister on 5 June 2017 to report on the outcomes of the first meeting. The Minister responded to thank the Chair for the Council’s advice. Both letters are published on the Department of Primary Industries website. No information regarding the SSTM was exchanged.
40	40. Excluding the letter tabled in budget estimates from the Ministers office, what other correspondence was sent during the share trading scheme to the Commercial Fishing advisory council?	In May 2017, CommFish NSW members were sent appointment information, travel details, background papers for the first meeting, an agenda, a location map, Department of Primary Industries proposals and original consultation papers - available at <a href="https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/consultation/ccfnswac">https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/consultation/ccfnswac</a> and an internal member contact list.

<p>41</p>	<p>41. In 2017 inquiry into the commercial fishing reforms in response to Justin Fields questions of how insider trading could occur given minutes of the Seafood industry advisory council were public, a Mr Braithwaite submitted testimony that “Many of the meetings that were held by sub committees were held under Parliamentary privilege (or that was what we were told). At one meeting that I attended we were told it was under parliamentary privilege and if we could not keep it that way we were told to leave the meeting, and at the end of the meeting even all the paperwork that was given to us taken back”</p> <p>(a) Where the claims of insider trading made by Mr Braithwaite investigated?                  (b) If so by who?                  (c) What were the results of that investigation?                  (d) If claims were not investigated can you advise why not?                  (e) Will you undertake an investigation into these claims to provide certainty that insider trading did not occur?</p>	<p>Any claims of insider trading should be reported to the appropriate authorities.</p>
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42	42. What percentage of the Total Allowable Catch has been utilised for every share class in the last 2 years?	<p>1 Aug 17 - 31 Jul 18                      Eastern rock lobster - 98.4%                      1 Jan 18 - 31 Dec 18                      Red urchin - 33.5%                      Abalone - 99.7%                      1 Aug 18 - 31 Jul 19                      Eastern rock lobster - 99.9%                      1 Jan 19 - 30 Jun 19                      Abalone - 100%                      1 Jan 19 - 31 Dec 19                      Red urchin - 30.9%</p> <p>For the following share classes, quota management only commenced in December 2017 so data is only available for one full fishing period:                      1 Jul 18 - 30 Jun 19                      Mud crab - 68.8%                      Blue swimmer crab - 41.3%                      Eel - 8.1%                      Eastern sea garfish - 80.6%                      Spanner crab - 74.3%</p> <p>Other species quotas only commenced in May or July 2019 so a full years data is not yet available.</p>
43	43. Minister Adam Marshall stated in his speech during the recent debate on the commercial fishing reforms and I quote below.	<p>a) Yes                      b) N/A                      c) The contract with APAC was signed on 8 June 2016. Howard Elliott only became involved in the project from Oct 2016.</p>

44	<p>44. " Before the Government had even developed the subsidised share trading market, the New South Wales Department of Primary Industries engaged an independent probity adviser to oversee the process."</p> <p>(a) Did the development of the SSTM software start before the Fisheries Management ACT 1994 Amendment bill November 2015 ?</p> <p>(b) If not, exactly what date did the development of the SSTM "winners determination software" start?,</p> <p>(c) What exact date did the probity advisor Howard Elliott commence work on probity onSSTM?</p>	As above.
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<p>45</p>	<p>45. Minister Marshall stated in his speech during the debate and I quote</p>	<p>a) “Tried and tested” referred to the fact that the reform process had already been subject to intense independent scrutiny. As per the speech, <i>“The Commercial Fisheries Business Adjustment Program has been fully implemented and the industry reforms have been tried and tested over and over again. This is all on the public record. Not only was this process subject to probity advisers at every step, in late 2016 and early 2017 the General Purpose Standing Committee No. 5 conducted a thorough inquiry into the reforms. I believe Robert Brown from the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party chaired the committee and endorsed the reform process.... In addition, in late 2017 proceedings were lodged in the Supreme Court, which ruled that the New South Wales Government had executed its reforms legally and correctly. The Court of Appeal upheld this judgment and the reforms were legal and could proceed unchanged.”</i></p> <p>b) See (a).</p> <p>c) Department of Primary Industries Fisheries staff tested the software in August and September 2016, ahead of the Preview market for fishers in October 2016. User Acceptance Testing (UAT) is standard practice in software development and was also a recommendation of the Probity Advisor.</p> <p>d) The UAT testing took place over 3 days in early August 2016 and a week from late September to early October 2016.</p> <p>e) In each round, staff were asked to fill out a report if they encountered any bugs or errors.</p> <p>f) N/A</p> <p>g) The UAT testing was recommended by APAC (as well as the software developers) but they did not participate. All testing was online, so they could not ‘attend’.</p> <p>h) It was not a game. Staff were allocated a number of de-identified fishing businesses and asked to submit hypothetical bids and offers. The aim was to test both how the ‘front end’ operated for users as well as how the ‘back end’ (algorithm) performed in matching those bids and offers.</p> <p>i) No. Shareholder names were not used in this process. In any case, fishing business numbers and shareholdings are publicly available information.</p>
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		<p>j) See (i).</p> <p>k) Approximately 30 in August 2016 and 40 in Sep/Oct 2016</p> <p>l) Yes.</p> <p>m) All staff are bound by the Department's Code of Conduct which covers conflicts of interest declaration and management.</p> <p>n) N/A.</p>
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46	<p>46. “The Government took the industry reforms incredibly seriously and the “process had been tried and tested on multiple occasions.”</p> <p>(a) in what environment did these tests take place?                  (b) What dates and year did all these tried tested multiple occasions take place ?                  (c) What Department or departments of the DPI tried and tested the "Winners determination software" named by the DPI staff and managers as the “GAME”.?                  (d) Over how many days weeks or months did the “Game” take place?                  Agriculture and Western New South Wales                  (e) Were there any minutes or reports of these multiple tests?                  (f) If not, why not?                  (g) Please list the probity consultants and firms who attended during all the multiple tests.                  (h) Can you explain in detail the “GAME” used within the department testing the "winners determination software" .?                  (i) Did the department get the permission from Fishing Business owners to use their information in this way ?                  (j) if not why not?                  (k) How many DPI staff participated in the "GAME “                  (l) Was any of the DPI staff who participated in the "Game “ also responsible for taking calls during the Commercial fishing adjustment programme and during the SSTM?                  (m) Was any conflicts of Interests declaration forms signed by DPI staff who participated in the test of what is now well known as the "Game “ within the department?                  (n) If so, how many?</p>	Refer to answer above.
	<b>Rural Assistance Authority Loans</b>	
47	47. Are older high interest loans including water infrastructure loans allowed to be converted to a modern low interest loan?	Rural Assistance Authority works with loan holders to renegotiate payment terms where necessary but does not currently offer refinancing facilities.

48	48. If not, why is a refinance facility offered widely in the private banking sector not considered suitable for these loans?	The Rural Assistance Authority negotiates payment terms.
49	49. When farmers are seeking approval for new loans, why is a lack of income attributed to drought used against them to deny approval?	The Rural Assistance Authority takes into account current drought conditions and works with applicants to determine their income in 'normal seasonal conditions'. This often involves looking at financial returns over a number of years to ascertain what non-drought years look like and these are considered.
50	50. Are you aware that farmers requesting a delayed repayment on a current loan while a new loan facility is being negotiated this request for a delay is being used to deny the new loan facility?	The Rural Assistance Authority works with customers to minimise duplication - especially in the application process.
51	51. What steps will you take to ensure that such unfair practices being administered by the RAA desist?	The Rural Assistance Authority (RAA) operates fairly and in line with Responsible Lending Guidelines. This means the RAA: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) makes reasonable inquiries about the consumer</li> <li>b) Makes a preliminary assessment whether the proposed credit contract is not unsuitable for the consumer.</li> <li>c) If requested, provides a written assessment that the credit contract is not unsuitable</li> </ul>
<b>Advocacy for Farmers - Coal Seam Gas</b>		
52	52. On 2 March 2020, you could not recall a letter from farmers that has been emailed twice to your Electorate Office, twice to your Ministerial Office, a hard copy placed in the mailroom at NSW Parliament and a Google Document link sent via SMS to your mobile phone over a 10-day period in the middle of February.	N/A



53	53. Given all these attempts to communicate with you by farmers have failed how can you maintain the view that you are a very strong advocate for the agricultural sector?	All correspondence received in my Ministerial office is processed according to established procedures.
54	54. Now that you are finally aware of this correspondence, what day and time in the next two weeks have yet set aside to meet with farmers?	All correspondence received in my Ministerial office is processed according to established procedures.
	<b>Rural Assistance Authority loans</b>	
55	55. Why aren't older high interest loans including water infrastructure loans allowed to be converted to the new loans on offer that have lower interest rates?	The Rural Assistance Authority works with loan holders to renegotiate payment terms where necessary but does not currently offer refinancing facilities.
56	56. When farmers are applying for new loan measures why is lack of income, which is arguably driven by drought, used as a reason to reject the loan application?	The Rural Assistance Authority takes into account current drought conditions and works with applicants to determine their income in 'normal seasonal conditions'. This often involves looking at financial returns over a number of years.
57	57. Is the Minister aware that when a farmer has requested a delayed repayment on a current loan while the new loan facility is being negotiated, the request for a delay is being used to deny the new loan?	The Rural Assistance Authority does not refuse any eligible applicant however account conduct is taken into consideration when loan applications are assessed to determine serviceability.
58	58. How many FTE positions in your office look after the Western NSW portfolio?	Responsibilities are shared across a number of staff.

59	59. How many FTE positions in the Planning, Industry and Environment Cluster look after the Western NSW portfolio?	The Central West and Far West Office of the Regional NSW Branch has an FTE of 15 staff located throughout the Central West and Far West Region who are available to work on the Western Portfolio. Additionally, there are 6 FTE dedicated to program support such as delivering critical Regional Growth Fund programs relevant to the Western Portfolio such as the \$170m Drought Stimulus Package are located within the Regional NSW program team.
60	60. How many press releases have you issued in your capacity as the Minister for Western NSW (not as Agriculture Minister)? Please list the date and subject of each release.	All Ministerial media releases are released in my capacity as Minister for Agriculture and Minister for Western NSW.
61	61. How many meetings have you had that directly relate to the Western NSW Portfolio, excluding drought? Please list the date and location of each meeting.	Meetings are publically disclosed in line with Ministerial requirements.
	<b>Debt relief for small western land mining leaseholds</b>	
62	62. Will you commit to maintaining the freeze on western land mining leaseholds and not implementing the higher statutory minimum rent in the Lightning Ridge Mineral Claim District? (a) Have you conducted any community consultation about this through your Western NSW portfolio? If yes, please provide the dates and locations for each meeting	Matters in relation to issuing and managing mining leases (including small scale titles in Lightning Ridge) should be referred to the Deputy Premier. Matters relating to western land leases should be referred to the Minister for Water, Property and Housing.
	<b>Jobs in Bourke</b>	

63	63. The NSW Government's Bourke Shire Aboriginal Employment Prosperity Strategy aims to increase the number of Aboriginal people taking up training and apprenticeships. How many apprenticeships have been created and taken up through this program?	This is a matter for the Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education.
<b>Western NSW Goat Herd</b>		
64	64. Are you aware that industry want funds from the goat transaction levy to be allocated to on the ground wild dog programs, such as the NSW wild dog coordinator position? (a) Have you spoken to your federal counterpart about this issue?	<p>It is unclear which industry or industries are being referred to in this question.</p> <p>It is unclear what position the 'NSW wild dog coordinator' refers to.</p> <p>The Western Wild Dog Coordinator Bruce Duncan has been secured and will be funded by the NSW Government for 2020, after Australian Wool Innovation withdrew its funding at the end of 2019.</p>
<b>Far West Regional Plan 2036</b>		
65	65. Can you provide a status report on all the goals and actions listed in the Far West Regional Plan 2036?	Please see the information available in the 2019 monitoring report for the Far West Regional Plan at <a href="http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/-/media/Files/DPE/Reports/Plans-for-your-area/Regional-plans/Far-West/far-west-regional-planning-monitoring-report-2019-12-17.pdf">www.planning.nsw.gov.au/-/media/Files/DPE/Reports/Plans-for-your-area/Regional-plans/Far-West/far-west-regional-planning-monitoring-report-2019-12-17.pdf</a> .

66	66. What is the role for the Minister for Western NSW in the implementation of the Far West Regional Plan 2036? Please provide a list of responsibilities.	There is no specific role for the Minister for Western NSW to implement the Far West Regional Plan 2036.
	<b>Water Embargo Debacle</b>	
67	67. What was the Minister's involvement in the February 2020 water embargo debacle on the Darling River system? (a) Was he consulted and if so when? (b) Was he advised and if so when? (c) Did the Chair of National Farmers Federation, Fiona Simpson, ring him or contact him? If so, what was the basis of those discussions and did he pass this information onto the Minister for Water?	<p>a) None. The Minister for Property, Water and Housing has sole decision making power for these matters.</p> <p>b) No</p> <p>c) No</p> <p>d) Yes, I was contacted by the President of the NFF to discuss a number of issues, including water embargoes. No, I did not pass this information onto the Minister for Water, Property and Housing.</p>
	<b>Wild Dog Fence</b>	
68	68. What is the Minister for Western NSW role in the construction of the wild dog fence extension? (a) Has the Minister inspected the fence? If so, please provide the date of inspection/s. (b) How is the extension progressing? Please provide a timeline of progression. (c) Is the extension on budget?	<p>a) The Wild Dog Fence is being delivered by multiple Government agencies including Local Land Services and Soil Conservation Services, both agencies that fall within the responsibilities of and report to the Minister for Agriculture and the Minister for Western NSW.</p> <p>b) The project timeline reflected in the NSW budget is for planning and approvals to take place in 2019-20 and construction to take place in 2020-21 and 2021-22.</p> <p>Delivery against the above timeframe is regularly reviewed by the project team and subject to change owing to various factors, including drought, and more recently floods in the area of the NSW/Queensland border. A project overview is available online at <a href="https://www.lls.nsw.gov.au/what-we-do/our-major-projects/nsw-wild-dog-fence-extension-project">https://www.lls.nsw.gov.au/what-we-do/our-major-projects/nsw-wild-dog-fence-extension-project</a>.</p> <p>c) The project was allocated \$37.5 million over three years in the NSW budget and is currently proceeding in line with that allocation. Any changes will be progressed via normal budget processes."</p>
	<b>Racist Dubbo Email</b>	

69	<p>69. Is the Minister aware of the contents of a racist email circulated by Dubbo Regional Councillor and National Party Member Kevin Parker?</p> <p>(a) Did the Minister's office receive the email?</p> <p>(b) If yes, to whom was the email sent and what actions have been taken?</p>	No, the email was not received by my office.
<b>Localised recessions in regional NSW</b>		
70	<p>70. Can the Minister provide a list of economic issues faced by communities in Western NSW? Please provide a list of locations and issues faced.</p> <p>(a) Has there been any analysis undertaken by the Minister or the Department regarding the risk of these communities slipping into localised economic recessions?</p> <p>i. Is so, is this information publically available?</p> <p>ii. If not, why has this analysis/research not been undertaken?</p> <p>iii. If not, is it something the Department will analyse/research in the future? Please provide a timeframe of any proposed work on this issue?</p>	<p>a) The NSW Government is undertaking a review of the economic impacts of bushfire on affected Functional Economic Regions (FERs) and whether this will affect their Regional Economic Development Strategies (REDS) with the first five reports expected to be finalised in coming weeks.</p> <p>The NSW Government has undertaken analysis of economic impacts of drought on regional economies, to inform appropriate government support for regional communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NSW is still struggling through the worst drought on record. Farmers, workers, regional businesses and communities are all feeling the crippling effects of this drought and doing it tough.</li> <li>• More than 260,000 people in 65 NSW local government areas are estimated to be highly exposed and vulnerable to the economic impacts of drought.</li> <li>• It is estimated this drought has resulted in a \$5.7 billion reduction in Gross State Product in 2018-19, and further losses of \$6.3 billion in 2019-20 and \$4.8 billion in 2020-21 are expected.</li> <li>• To date, over \$3.9 billion has been committed to the drought response in NSW.</li> <li>• The Government is providing a range of services such as mental health support, certainty for schools with reduced enrolment, subsidised courses for people wanting to upskill or change careers and dropping the cost of farming by waiving a range of fees.</li> <li>• Over \$1 billion has already gone out the door to help farmers, towns and businesses who are doing it tough so that Regional NSW remains a vibrant place to live and do business.</li> <li>• On 17 March the NSW Government announced a \$2.3 billion health boost and economic stimulus package to protect the community and help protect jobs in the face of the COVID-19 outbreak over the next six months. \$1.6 billion of this package is to support jobs.</li> </ul>

	<b>Feral animal control on the South Coast and in the Illawarra</b>	
71	<p>71. What feral animal pest control strategies will the Government implement in the Illawarra and on the South Coast to prevent further damage to the environment during the recovery from the recent bush fire crisis?</p> <p>(a) How much will the Government spend in 2019/20?</p> <p>(b) How much will the Government spend in 2020/21?</p>	<p>The Illawarra and South Coast Regions of NSW will be guided by the South East Regional Strategic Pest Animal Management Plan to manage pest animals to prevent further damage to the environment during the recovery from the recent bush fire crisis.</p> <p>a) The NSW Government has committed \$158,000 on pest management programs across the Illawarra and South Coast Regions of NSW in 2019/20.</p> <p>b) NSW Treasury has yet to confirm the 2020/21 financial year budget.</p>
	<b>NSW Marine Park Advisory Committees</b>	
72	<p>72. Please provide a list of the current members of all NSW Marine Park Advisory Committees and the position against which they were appointed?</p>	<p>Marine Park Advisory Committee details can be found on the dpi website - <a href="https://www.marine.nsw.gov.au/advisory-bodies/marine-park-advisory-committees">https://www.marine.nsw.gov.au/advisory-bodies/marine-park-advisory-committees</a></p>
73	<p>73. Please provide the biographical or background information provided for each appointed candidate to support the Expression of Interest and appointment process for each of the NSW Marine Park Advisory Committees</p>	<p>The Department cannot disclose names and affiliations of applicants for membership of the NSW Marine Park Advisory Committees as this is personal information.</p>

74	74. Were any formal or informal representations made by the Member for Bega Andrew Constance or staff of the Member for Bega to local marine park, fisheries or DPIE staff or staff in the Minister for Agriculture's office in relation to the Bateman Marine Park Advisory Committee appointments?	I am not aware of any formal or informal representations were received from the Member for Bega or staff of the Member for Bega to staff in my office or staff in DPI Fisheries.
75	75. Were any letters of appointment to the Batemans Marine Park Advisory Committee made to individuals who had not responded to the Expression of Interest process? (a) If yes, who were these people and on what basis were they appointed?	No, All members and alternate members who were appointed to the Batemans Marine Park Advisory Committee had applied through the EOI process
76	76. In regards to recent appointments to the Batemans Marine Park Advisory Committee, were there any positions that did not attract a nomination from the initial EOI process that were filled by a nominee for another position (as mentioned in evidence in the hearing)? (a) If yes, which positions were filled by persons who did not nominate for that position in the initial EOI process? (b) Was any effort made to identify individuals to fill any positions without a nomination through the initial EOI process other than by looking at nominees for other positions? i. If yes, what were these efforts?	No, all members and alternate members who were appointed to the Batemans Marine Park Advisory Committee had applied through the Expression of Interest process for the category of membership for which they were appointed.
	<b>Enforcement of amnesty changes in Batemans Marine Park</b>	

77	<p>77. During the hearings it was confirmed that marine park and fisheries staff were informed of the sanctuary zone changes on the same day as the announcement. With regards to the notification of staff:</p> <p>(a) At what time were staff notified?                  (b) How were the staff notified? Was it by phone, email or another means?                  i. If in writing, please provide a copy of the notice provided to staff                  (c) Was a direction provided to staff in regards to enforcement/compliance actions relating to the new regime since the announcement?                  i. Please provide a copy of that notice                  (d) Were any other directions provided to staff in regards to enforcement of other marine park or fisheries or threatened species laws/regulations in the Batemans Marine Park since 12 December 2019?                  i. Please provide a copy of that notice or direction                  (e) What compliance actions have been taken in the Batemans Marine Park since the decision?</p>	<p>a) &amp; b) On Thursday 12 December 2019 at 11:57am all Fisheries staff were made aware of the changes via email.</p> <p>b) i. As supplied for No.58 in QoN.</p> <p>c) Further email correspondence was sent on 16 and 18 December 2019. This was sent to all staff located in the Montague District, including Batemans Marine Park Fisheries officers.</p> <p>c) i. As supplied for No.58 in QoN.</p> <p>d) No, no other directions were provided</p> <p>e) Fourteen offences have been detected in the Batemans Marine Park since the decision. These consisted of six written cautions, six penalty notices and two offences listed as pending awaiting further investigation.</p>
<b>MEMA Fire Related Work and Coordination</b>		
78	<p>78. During the hearings, the Chair of the Marine Estate Management Authority mentioned (hearing transcript p70) that there had been activity within MEMA, prompted by the bushfires, to accelerate work in the catchments and engagement with councils. Can more detail about this work be provided?</p>	<p>Marine Estate Management Strategy (MEMS) initiative and project leads have and continue to engage with local councils regarding a number of MEMS projects focused on improving coastal habitats.</p> <p>Local Land Services (LLS), funded via MEMS, are working closely with local councils to provide prioritised erosion protection measures to reduce water quality impacts from burnt catchments.</p> <p>Given the evidence based and adaptive management approach taken by MEMS, a review of priority works sites will be undertaken to ensure on-ground works have regard to recent bushfire impact information and are coordinated with other works being led by Councils and community organisations, as well as LLS.</p>



79	79. What actions have been taken by NSW Fisheries, DPIE or MEMA agencies to mitigate water quality impacts from fires in the Bega, Eurobodalla and Shoalhaven Council areas?	<p>In the Eurobodalla, Bega and Shoalhaven local government areas, Local Land Services (LLS), funded via MEMS, are working closely with local councils to provide prioritised erosion protection measures to reduce water quality impacts from burnt catchments.</p> <p>Department of Primary Industries Fisheries facilitated and coordinated with Local Government and other relevant agencies discussions on ways to reduce the impact of bushfire run-off on the local oyster industry. This included contributions to a prioritisation process of waterways for on-ground works to address water quality as part of bushfire recovery efforts.</p>
80	<p>80. The Eurobodalla Shire Council has identified Whittakers Creek in the South Brou sanctuary zone (one of those subject to the sanctuary zone roll-back) as a place where a fish kill has occurred as a result of bushfire and flood impacts.</p> <p>(a) Has any action been taken in regard to these impacts? (b) Will this event and other impacts from the fires be considered as part of the public consultation process for the rezoning of this marine sanctuary?</p>	<p>a) The fish death event at Whittakers Creek was investigated by Department of Primary Industries on 9 January 2020. The likely cause was related to elevated temperatures and low dissolved oxygen levels in an isolated pool following prolonged drought conditions.</p> <p>b) The public consultation for any proposed changes to the Batemans Marine Park will take into account all matters that stakeholders wish to raise, including these impacts.</p>
	<b>Advice and Impacts of Sanctuary Zone Changes</b>	
81	<p>81. Was the Australian Department of Environment and Energy consulted with regards to the Amnesty on fishing in the Montague Island Sanctuary Zones given the Island's listing on the IUCN Green List?</p> <p>(a) If yes, what information was provided by the Department of Environment and Energy? (b) If not, why not?</p>	<p>No, there is no requirement to consult with the Australian Department of Environment and Energy consulted with regards to the Amnesties.</p> <p>a) Not applicable as the NSW Government did not consult with the Australian Department of Environment and Energy.</p> <p>b) Consultation regarding the amnesty was not required, however, all parties will have the opportunity to provide input during the public consultation for any draft regulation relating to Montague Island.</p>

82	82. Given Grey Nurse Sharks are regularly observed at Montague Island outside of the 1 November to 30 April window as it relates to new fishing restrictions in the now open Montague Island South and East Marine Sanctuaries, what action will be taken to ensure Grey Nurse Sharks will not be negatively impacted by the changes?	Regular compliance patrols will be conducted in the area. Advisory information around the new restrictions is also available to the public online - <a href="https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/marine-protected-areas/marine-parks/batemans-marine-park">https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/marine-protected-areas/marine-parks/batemans-marine-park</a>
83	83. On how many days have compliance actions been undertaken on water inside the Montague Island South and East Marine Sanctuaries since the 12 December 2019 announcement to open these areas to fishing? (a) How many warnings have been issued to fishers not complying with the fishing restrictions in these areas over the period since the announcement? (b) Is DPIE aware of any Grey Nurse Sharks being caught by fishers fishing in these zones since the announcement? (c) Is DPIE aware of any Black Rock Cod being caught by fishers in these zones since the announcement?	Since 12 December 2019, to date (up until 11 March) there have been 6 days where Fisheries Officers have patrolled the area of Montague Island. It should be noted bushfires in the South Coast region directly affected staff and hampered patrols in the area.  a. Nil b. No c. No

84	<p>84. Please provide the scientific advice relevant to the sanctuary zone changes the Minister considered before taking the decision with regards to the following potential impacts of the changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Impact on threatened grey nurse sharks and black rock cod at Montague Island</li> <li>(b) Risk of exacerbating the urchin barren problem at Montague Island</li> <li>(c) Impact on trophic relationships among marine life, including seals and seabirds</li> <li>(d) Impact on benthic communities</li> <li>(e) Impact on shorebirds</li> <li>(f) Impact on seagrasses and other macrophytes</li> </ul>	<p>The proposed changes have been informed by Threat and Risk Assessment (TARA) document. The TARA is publically available.</p>
<b>Private Native Forestry</b>		
85	<p>85. For the Northern NSW forestry region, please provide a breakdown of how many hectares of native forestry logging was/is approved under Private Native Forestry Plans in the following years:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) 2017/18</li> <li>(b) 2018/19</li> <li>(c) 2019/20</li> <li>(d) 2020/21</li> </ul>	<p>The breakdown for the area of Private Native Forestry (PNF) Plans approved each year within the Northern NSW forest region are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) 2017/18: 24,584 ha</li> <li>(b) 2018/19: 24,458 ha</li> <li>(c) 2019/20: 24,145 ha (as of 9 March 2020)</li> <li>(d) The 2020-21 financial year has not yet commenced and as such there are no figures available.</li> </ul> <p>These figures are indicative of approved plan area.</p>

86	<p>86. For the Southern NSW forestry region, please provide a breakdown of how many hectares of native forestry logging was/is approved under Private Native Forestry Plans in the following years:</p> <p>(a) 2017/18 (b) 2018/19 (c) 2019/20 (d) 2020/21</p>	<p>The breakdown for the area of Private Native Forestry Plans approved each year within the Southern NSW forest region are as follows:</p> <p>a) 2017/18: 259 ha b) 2018/19: 372 ha c) 2019/20: 277 ha (as of 9 March 2020) d) The 2020-21 financial year has not yet commenced and as such there are no figures available.</p> <p>These figures are indicative of approved plan area.</p>
87	<p>87. For the River red gum forestry region, please provide a breakdown of how many hectares of native forestry logging was/is approved under Private Native Forestry Plans in the following years:</p> <p>(a) 2017/18 (b) 2018/19 (c) 2019/20 (d) 2020/21</p>	<p>The breakdown for the area of Private Native Forestry Plans approved each year within the River Red Gum forest region are as follows:</p> <p>a) 2017/18: 2,549 ha b) 2018/19: 4,134 ha c) 2019/20: 531 ha (as of 9 March 2020) d) The 2020-21 financial year has not yet commenced and as such there are no figures available.</p>
88	<p>88. For the Cypress and Western Hardwood forestry region, please provide a breakdown of how many hectares of native forestry logging was/is approved under Private Native Forestry Plans in the following years:</p> <p>(a) 2017/18 (b) 2018/19 (c) 2019/20 (d) 2020/21</p>	<p>The breakdown for the area of Private Native Forestry Plans approved each year within the Cypress and Western Hardwood forest region are as follows:</p> <p>a) 2017/18: 4,261 ha b) 2018/19: 4,555 ha c) 2019/20: 10,466 ha (as of 9 March 2020) d) The 2020-21 financial year has not yet commenced and as such there are no figures available.</p>

89	<p>89. In regards to the recent bushfires:</p> <p>(a) Has the Government undertaken any assessment of fire impacts and/or wildlife loss across land subject to Private Native Forestry Plans? If not, why not?</p> <p>(b) If so, what is the extent of damage (in hectares) to land covered by Private Native Forestry Plans? Please provide a breakdown in the following forest regions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Northern NSW</li> <li>ii. Southern NSW</li> <li>iii. River red gum forests</li> <li>iv. Cypress and western hardwood forests</li> </ul> <p>(c) Are any private native forestry operations currently underway in areas impacted by the fires?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. If so, where and in which forestry regions listed above?</li> </ul>	<p>a) Yes.</p> <p>b)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) 187,175 ha</li> <li>(ii) 9,081 ha</li> <li>(iii) 0 ha</li> <li>(iv) 3 ha</li> </ul> <p>c) The PNF Codes of Practice do not enable salvage harvesting. Normal procedures apply.</p>
90	<p>90. What controls is the Government applying to reduce the impact of private native forestry on wildlife and habitat that has been affected by the bushfires?</p> <p>(a) Does the Government consider that current approvals under Private Native Forestry Plans need to be reassessed in light of the loss of habitat and species from the fires?</p>	<p>The Private Native Forestry (PNF) Codes of Practice do not enable salvage harvesting. Normal procedures apply. (a) The government is considering how to improve the current approval process under PNF Plans as part of the PNF Review, including managing the impact of fire.</p>
	<p><b>Land clearing - North West NSW pilot</b></p>	

91	<p>91. Evidence was given in the hearing from Mr David Witherdin regarding a pilot study in North West NSW related to controls around native vegetation clearing (page 78 of the transcript).</p> <p>(a) What were the primary concerns of landowners that initiated this pilot?</p> <p>(b) What outcomes are being considered by the Government as a result of this pilot?</p> <p>(c) If regulatory changes are required, what level of public consultation will the Government engage in?</p> <p>i. Will the Government commit to engaging environmental groups in this consultation process?</p>	<p>a) The current work with landholders in the north west region was initiated by Local Land Services, in consultation with affected landowners. The Regional Reference Group was initiated in response to an evaluation of the effectiveness of the land management framework in the Walgett area of north-west NSW in 2018, undertaken as part of the implementation of the land management and biodiversity conservation reforms. The purpose of the evaluation was to test the Land Management (Native Vegetation) Code 2018 and the Native Vegetation Panel elements of the Land Management Framework to ensure they were meeting the objectives and intent of the reforms.</p> <p>b) The evaluation demonstrated that elements of the framework are not fit-for-purpose in all agricultural development contexts and may require region-specific solutions to better achieve the objectives and intent of the reforms. Options for region-specific solutions are still in the co-design phase with directly impacted stakeholders, no outcomes have been agreed within the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment or between Ministers to date.</p> <p>c) A public consultation process is required for any amendments to the Land Management (Native Vegetation) Code 2018, as per the <i>Local Land Services Act 2013</i> (LLS Act). Section 60U of the LLS Act requires proposed amendments to be made publicly available for a period of at least 4 weeks.</p> <p>i. During the period of public consultation, any person may make a written submission to the Minister on the proposed code. Environmental groups, along with other interested stakeholders, are encouraged to participate in any public consultation period should the NSW Government propose to make changes to the Code or related instruments.</p>
<b>Land clearing data</b>		
92	<p>92. Evidence was given in the hearing from Mr David Witherdin when he stated “in terms of the actual statistics around land clearing, those are updated daily on our website to ensure transparency” (page 79 of the transcript). What is the full web address for these land clearing figures that are updated daily?</p>	<p>The Public Registers providing data on authorisations under the Land Management (Native Vegetation) Code 2018 are available at <a href="https://www.lls.nsw.gov.au/_old/land-management/public-registers">https://www.lls.nsw.gov.au/_old/land-management/public-registers</a></p> <p>Authorisations are not indicative of activity.</p>

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