

THE STABLE FLY ACTION GROUP INC (SFAG)
Meeting with Minister for Agriculture Hon T Redman
1 December 2011

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

1. REGULATIONS AND PENALTIES

Preamble

- On 1 September 2013 the Department of Health will relinquish the Health (Poultry Manure) Regulations.
- Department of Premier & Cabinet have suggested the regulations come under Local Government By-Laws
- SFAG have consulted with the seven local governments involved in the Stable (Biting) Fly Management Project and they expressed reservations, including doubts that local governments would adopt the By-Laws

SFAG suggests an alternative and workable solution could be the BioSecurity & Agricultural Management (BAM) Act -

- The Minister for Agriculture can have stable (biting) flies included in the Act as a declared pest
- There are three levels of declared pests under the BAM Act :
 - C1 - Exclusion
 - C2 - Eradication
 - C3 - Management
- C3 appears to be the most appropriate option
- DAFWA can then put in place a project to ascertain the level of the problem – this is already underway with the current project
- DAFWA can then put in place a Management Plan
- Relevant parties could agree to comply with the Management Plan
- Realistic penalties could be put in place for non-compliance

Question 1

- a) Will Minister Redman take steps to have stable (biting) flies included in the BAM Act as a declared pest?**

- b) If not, what state based legislation will be used to control fly breeding?**

2. DAFWA/UWA STABLE (BITING) FLY MANAGEMENT PROJECT

Preamble

VegetablesWA (VWA) are not attending stakeholder meetings and have not contributed financially to this stakeholder project.

Question 2

- a) *Does Minister Redman know why the VWA are not participating?*

- b) *What steps will the Minister take to ensure that the vegetable industry, including those growers that are not members of the VWA, participates in the Stable (Biting) Fly Management Project?*

3. LONG TERM SOLUTIONS FOR MANAGEMENT OF ORGANIC WASTE

Preamble

It is imperative that the total ban on raw poultry manure (rpm) remains in place after the Department of Health relinquishes the Health (Poultry Manure) Regulations on 1 September 2013

Problems with rpm use are not confined to fly breeding – nitrates in groundwater is also a serious public health problem

Department of Environment & Conservation (DEC)/Waste Management Authority's *Waste Management Strategy* addresses waste management in WA

The Report to the WMB Working Group on Standards for Organics (including compost) Applied to Land Key Findings states:

"There is a need for government to develop policies and programs that promote the recycling of organic materials ..."

and the Recommendations states :

- 1) That the WA Government should adopt minimum standards for all organics applied to land to address the potential health risk*
- 2) That pasteurization be set as a minimum processing requirement for all organics prior to land application*

Composting of organic waste, which includes vegetable crop residue, olive processing residue, and untreated manures from feedlots, piggeries and saleyards, must be promoted and encouraged by the government to create a long term solution for management of organic waste, simultaneously creating alternative soil conditioners and fertilizers for the agricultural sector that will not breed flies

Question 3

a) Will Minister Redman commit to retaining the total ban on the use of raw poultry manure in the irrigated horticultural industry after the Department of Health relinquishes the Health (Poultry Manure) Regulations on 1 September 2013?

b) If not, why not?

Question 4

(a) Will the Minister commit to developing policies to adopt minimum standards for all organics applied to land to address the potential health risk (including the risk caused by vectors such as flies)?

and

(b) Will the Minister commit to setting pasteurization (composting) as a minimum processing requirement for all organics prior to land application, as per the Recommendations of the Working Group on Standards for Organics, in order to provide a long term solution to management of organic waste in Western Australia?



**THE STABLE FLY ACTION GROUP INC (SFAG)
Notes of Meeting with
Minister for Agriculture Hon T Redman MLA
at
Parliament House
1 December 2011**

PRESENT

Hon T Redman MLA, Minister for Agriculture & Food; Dexter Davies, Principal Policy Adviser Agriculture & Food; Hon Grant Woodhams, Member for Moore, Hon Frank Alban, Member for Swan Hills; Dr Ian McPharlin, DAFWA; Dr David Cook, Centre for Forensic Science, UWA; Bob Wilson, Chairman SFAG; Jo Ottaway, Secretary SFAG; Dr Anne Sibbel, President Bullsbrook Residents & Ratepayers Association (BRRA) and Committee member SFAG

APOLOGIES

Nil

PURPOSE OF MEETING

To discuss Questions on Notice sent to Minister Redman prior to the meeting (copy attached).

SFAG Chairman Bob Wilson gave a short introduction as follows :

- SFAG have met with Director General of Department of Premier & Cabinet (DPC) who advised DAFWA is now the lead agency in stable (biting) fly matters, and had recommended that Local Government ByLaws may be the solution to the management of the problem
- SFAG have met with local government representatives, who have reservations about the workability of this arrangement and some may decide not to adopt ByLaws
- SFAG have concerns about management of raw poultry manure after 1 September 2013 when DOH relinquish the Health (Poultry Manure) Regulations
- Stronger legislation and penalties are a priority
- Revisiting of the BioSecurity & Agricultural Management (BAM) Act for the purpose of including stable (biting) flies as a declared pest at the Category 3 level, including appropriate Regulations
- VWA not participating in the Stable (Biting) Fly Management Project to date

REGULATIONS AND PENALTIES

Minister Redman responded -

The total ban on rpm will remain in place after 1 September 2013.

He reiterated that the DPC has given a commitment that if the local government ByLaws, or some other relevant legislation, are not in place by 1 September 2013 the existing Regulations will remain, and the government will honour that commitment.

He was receiving advice it was unlikely stable (biting) flies would come under one of the declared pest categories in the BAM Act as it is not a statewide problem, but he did not discount it entirely. He acknowledged the BAM Act would give more power to local government than ByLaws. He indicated this option could be investigated further by his department.

DAFWA/UWA STABLE(BITING) FLY MANAGEMENT PROJECT

Minister Redman responded -

He did not know why VWA were not attending the Project Stakeholder Meetings and he is unable to force VWA to participate financially in the project, however his department would contact them to recommend it would be in their best interests to attend the project meetings.

He acknowledged the contribution of the horticultural industry to the stable (biting) fly problem is the result of poor management of vegetable crop waste (both intentional and unintentional), and that changing practices to achieve a positive outcome will require collaboration between stakeholders.

LONG TERM SOLUTIONS FOR MANAGEMENT OF ORGANIC WASTE

Minister Redman responded –

He was not familiar with the Department of Environment & Conservation (DEC) reports *Waste Management Strategy* or the *Report to the WMB Working Group on Standards for Organics (including Compost) Applied to Land*, which address long term solutions for management of all organic wastes, and make recommendations to the government.

He expressed interest in these DEC reports and their recommendations to the government, and undertook to ascertain what progress was being made.

He recommended a cost benefit analysis for horticulturalists regarding recycling and composting of crop residues should be carried out. Dr Cook undertook to do this.

Notes taken by

J Ottaway

SECRETARY

THE STABLE FLY ACTION GROUP INC (SFAG)

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