

RESEARCH, COMO Office,

JANUARY 23RD 19 76
Western Australia

Reference—H.O.

Local

SUBJECT: DIEBACK QUARANTINE : AID TO GIVING ADDRESSES AND BRIEFINGS.

It is anticipated that during all stages of our quarantine operation but particularly in the first year, occasions will arise where officers of the department need to deliver a short talk or address to the public or industry.

While it is not proposed that pre-recorded talks be available or that officers will read "verbatim" from a prepared speech sheet, there are some aids available which can help even the most inexperienced speaker to convey his message.

1. Literature available includes:

Forest Focus No. 14
Information Sheet No. 4
Information Sheet No. 35
Research Paper No. 3
Technote No. 8/75 (Agric. Dept)
Bulletins 84, 85.

2. Slide projectors:

Kodak Carousel slide projectors are available for loan at Bunbur Manjimup, Harvey and Como. Mr Batini is the contact for Como. However, in many cases there is a projector available through local staff or other Government Departments.

3. Colour slide set:

Forwarded with this letter is a set of slides and a descriptive sheet. Further slides are expected to be available in the near future to give a fuller coverage of the topic.

It is suggested that an officer who has an address to present should select up to 15 or so slides most appropriate for his audience, rather than use the complete set. Slide sets are to be held at Como, Kelmscott, Dwellingup, Harvey, Collie, Bunbury and Manjimup for the time being, but further sets will be available on requisition.

4. Notes for presenting a talk:

Each situation will require a particular type of approach, but as a guide, I am enclosing the outline of briefings given to all staff at Como and Head Office.

5. Other aids:

It is often of assistance to use objects or examples to hold the interest of your audience. The simplest of these are plans, and in many situations a copy of the divisional quarantine 80 and the 1:500 000 quarantine map will be suitable.

B J Beggs
B. J. BEGGS
CONSERVATOR OF FORESTS.

PNH/me

DISTRIBUTION: See attached list.

Encls.

The Department has amended the Forests Act, made new Disease regulations and proclaimed a huge Forest Disease Risk Area. This gathering has been convened to give a better understanding of why this has been done and to suggest some of the ways in which these actions may affect each and every member of the staff.

1. The Disease

1.1 Trees and other plants within the forest zone of Western Australia are threatened by a fungus disease which works underground, killing the feeder roots.

Its scientific name is *Phytophthora cinnamomi*, and it is commonly referred to as jarrah dieback or jarrah root rot.

The disease is insidious and trees or shrubs may be affected for months or even years before visible signs can be seen.

1.2 Dieback is widely distributed in the south west. It has infected 172 000 hectares of State Forest and is present in the soil on a further 100 000 hectares outside State Forest. The forest affected represents nearly ten per cent of our forest estate.

1.3 Jarrah is the main tree species killed by the fungus but many of our shrubs and wildflowers are also affected.

Recent Developments for Control

2.1 A "task force" was set up within the Department in 1974 to re-examine the problem, to review effectiveness of the then current procedures for restricting its spread, and to propose a new attack on the disease.

... as a direct result of the task force's work, an approach was made to Government seeking amendment to the Forest Act to allow us to adopt better control of the disease.

2.3 The Forest Act Amendment Act was passed in December 1974, allowing the development of Forest Disease Regulations and of detailed plans and procedures for definition of Forest Disease Risk Areas within which, a quarantine control system could be applied. It took twelve months to develop an acceptable approach and to pre-check the impact that quarantine would have, on the people, both individuals and organisations, who use the forest.

In the Perth region alone, 55 organisations (State and Commonwealth Department, Companies, Institutions, Clubs, etc.) were visited for discussion of our proposals.

2.4 Finally, in December 1975 the fund plans and proposals for Forest Disease Risk Areas were submitted to Executive Council, and the areas were proclaimed in the Government Gazette on Friday, January 16, 1976. Approximately 500 000 hectares have been proclaimed.

3. Implementing Quarantine

If the fungus is allowed to proceed unchecked, most forest values will be adversely affected

- timber
- recreation
- water
- flora and fauna

The major means by which the disease spreads result from the activity of man (or persons) with the assistance of equipment and machines which disturb or move infected soil. To overcome this problem areas of apparently healthy forest are being quarantined at least for sufficient time for visible symptoms to develop.

Quarantine involves restriction of vehicles moving between diseased and healthy areas. Washing down facilities will be provided to clean vehicles as they come out of infected areas.

Implementation therefore involves:

- 3.1 Education and Publicity
- 3.2 Signposting quarantine areas
- 3.3 Issue of permits
- 3.4 Patrol and law enforcement

3.1 Education and Publicity

- talks to schools, tertiary education groups, Rotary Lions Club, have been carried out for 12 months - some 40 or more talks.
- Issue of Forest Focus No.14, Information Sheet 4 has been revised and Information Sheet 35 prepared.
- There has been coverage on Channel 2, 7, 9 and Channel 3 in Bunbury, together with a small programme on school T.V.
- Articles and news items have appeared in the daily papers, Weekend News, Farmers' Weekly, the Countryman and R.A.C. Road Patrol.

- being
- Clear definition of boundaries of quarantine areas and of limits to road use is essential and a series of five signs (see Sheet 35) have been produced.
 - The signs and boom gates are being erected in the field this week (19-25/1/76) at pre-chosen sites.

3.3 Issue of Permits is at two levels

- Long term entry permits are being issued from Perth for organisations with a proven need for repeated entry to designated points (mainly water resource and S.E.C.).
- Short term permits are issued from each Divisional Office and will only be issued where the entry can be justified. I could not get a permit in most Divisions and neither could you!

3.4 Patrol and Law Enforcement

Blocked roads and signposts alone, will not ensure control of quarantine areas, and so two levels of patrol are being initiated:

- a) Ground patrol by Divisional staff.
- b) Aerial patrol by five spotter aircraft.

Patrol will ensure correct use of entry permits and act as a security against illegal entry.

In the early stages the patrol officer will place emphasis on public understanding and will try to create a "friendly forester" image. For this reason he will be equipped with a kit of pamphlets, Forest Focus etc. and will wear the Departmental emblem on

an official I.D. card to convince belligerent people of his status. At a later stage, more effort will be directed towards prosecution of offenders.

4. Impact on Department

It is confidently expected that public reaction, interest and inquiry will increase. This will place pressure on most parts of the administration from the Conservator down to the newest recruit. The pressure may be in many forms, written, financial, verbal, etc. and so we are seeking your help in handling the problems as they arise.

Probably the commonest problem will be in providing answers to members of the public. During working hours they can often be referred to senior staff, but to anyone who knows that you work for the Forests Department, you are looked upon as a spokes (man, woman, or person) off the job - at church, in the bar, on the beach etc. In these situations it is suggested that you answer questions as best you can but refer the enquirer to someone in Head Office or Como, or seek to provide them with Forest Focus No.14, or Information Sheets 4 and 35. Note also new Q plans.

5. Questions and Feedback

There is need for continuing control and reference to policy during the period of quarantine. For this purpose a Policy Advisory Group consists of Mr. McNamara, Dr. Hopkins and Mr. J.B. Campbell, while the co-ordination group comprises Mr. F.J. Campbell, Mr. Grace, Mr. Hewett and Mr. Batini.

should problems arise in your own job or in your section, relating to dieback quarantine, you should advise a member of the co-ordinating group.

It is hoped that a member of that group will be able to call on each section leader within the next 2 or 3 weeks to check whether any quarantine problems have arisen.

Any questions!