

The Hon. Tony Burke MP

Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Minister for Sustainable Population

Preparations continuing ahead of expected spring locust outbreak

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Members of Parliament will be briefed tomorrow on the latest preparations ahead of expected locust hatchings in spring, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Tony Burke said today.

Head of the Australian Plague Locust Commission Chris Adriaansen will brief members on which areas are likely to be affected and the important roles of farmers and both the state and federal governments.

Mr Burke said it was important that local members had the latest information, given the potential damage the locust outbreak could cause and the critical role of individual landholders.

Locust hatchings are expected in late September and October in southern NSW, northern Victoria and south-eastern South Australia.

Good soil moisture in autumn and winter is expected to lead to significant hatchings and a much higher number than usual of locusts reaching maturity.

The Australian Plague Locust Commission has been working closely with the South Australian, Victorian, NSW and Queensland governments.

The Commission also aerially treated more than 200,000 hectares of heavily infested land in north-western NSW in March, destroying an estimated eight billion locusts.

A coordinated response to locust hatchings also relies on:

- State Governments - responsible for coordinating locust control when aerial spraying is not effective, particularly in areas with smaller farming blocks and power lines; and
- Landholders – have an important responsibility to monitor locust egg beds and carry out spraying on their properties.

“Authorities will continue working over winter to coordinate the response to these hatchings,” Mr Burke said.

“This includes ordering chemicals and working with pesticide manufacturers, talking to landholders and implementing locust control in National Parks and other public lands.

“An effective response in spring will depend on landholders and the state and Commonwealth governments continuing to work closely together.”

All Members of Parliament, regardless of their politics, can be part of this cooperative response.

For more information on locusts visit <http://www.daff.gov.au/animal-plant-health/locusts>.