

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications**  
**Legislation Committee**  
Answers to questions on notice  
**Environment and Energy portfolio**

**Question No:** 300  
**Hearing:** Supplementary Budget Estimates  
**Outcome:** Agency  
**Program:** Bureau of Meteorology (BoM)  
**Topic:** WA Wheatbelt BoM Coverage  
**Hansard Page:** 22-23  
**Question Date:** 24 October 2016  
**Question Type:** Spoken

**Senator Lines, Sue asked:**

Dr Johnson: Possibly there is, based on this feedback, but, as I said in my previous response, we are working closely with the Western Australian government. We have entered into an agreement with the Western Australian department of agriculture to install and maintain three digital Doppler radars in the Wheatbelt. The sites where they will be located will be Watheroo in the northern Wheatbelt, South Doodlakine in the central Wheatbelt and at Newdegate in the southern Wheatbelt. Those are all at different phases of their evolution. The Watheroo site is currently in its design phase. We hope that that will be operational by April 2017. At the South Doodlakine site construction works are underway.

Senator LINES: When will that one be operational?

Dr Johnson: We are expecting that to be operational by December this year. At Newdegate site works are complete and my understanding is that the radar is operational at the moment, or if it is not fully operational it is certainly going through operational testing and will be online in the next few weeks.

Senator LINES: What additional reach will those three sites give?

Dr Johnson: I do not have the map right in front of me, but we are well aware of the gap that you have identified. I do not have the statistics in front of me as to what the maximum areal extent of that new coverage will be.

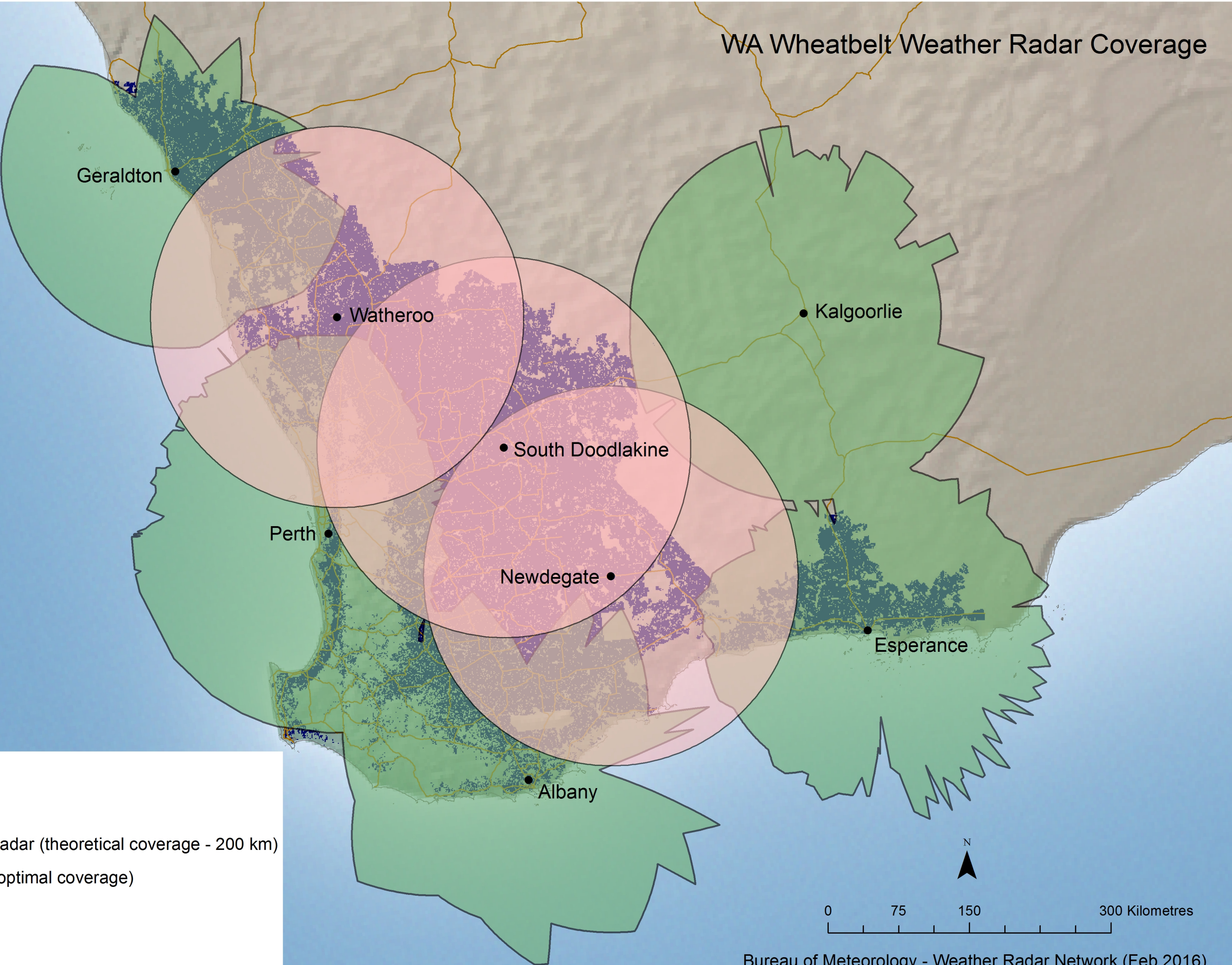
Senator LINES: Can you get them?

Dr Johnson: We can certainly get that on notice, if that is your interest. ...

**Answer:**

1. The three new weather radars in the WA Wheatbelt are expected to cover a total area of approximately 279,000 square kilometres (based on area 200 kilometres from each of the three radar, and including overlap with each other and existing radar). Please refer to **Attachment A** which shows this graphically.
2. When the coverage of existing radars is included, the estimated total area of *additional* cover provided by the three new radars is approximately 152,000 square kilometres (including over the ocean). This includes around 95,000 square kilometres of land used for cropping.

# WA Wheatbelt Weather Radar Coverage



**Legend**

- Radar Location
- WA Wheatbelt Radar (theoretical coverage - 200 km)
- Existing Radar (optimal coverage)
- Major Roads

**Landcover**

- Area of annual cropping agriculture

