

NEWSFRONT

MP follows new trail on fox concerns

NO charges will be pursued following a review of documentation relating to the fox eradication program, but a complaint will be made to Tasmania's Integrity Commission.

Assistant Commissioner Glenn Frame announced yesterday the Tasmania Police review of a complaint made by former officer and now Windemere MLC Ivan Dean had determined that no criminal offence had been committed.

Tasmania Police investigated Mr Dean's complaint that carcasses, scats and other physical evidence of a fox presence in Tasmania — which backed up the decade-long, \$50 million fox eradication effort — had been tampered with.

He made a complaint to police in February after years of claiming the state's controversial fox hunt was based on



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fabricated evidence and was a waste of resources.

Mr Dean's opinion has been backed by two independent scientific reports. One, by a group of scientists led by fox ecologist Clive Marks, claimed it found anomalies in the scat data collected by the Tasmanian Environment Department.

Mr Dean yesterday said he had no issues with the police action. "It was a preliminary investigation which found that they were not satisfied that the issue warranted a police investigation," Mr Dean said.

He said he believed evidence obtained by the police would be given to the Integrity

Commission to aid any subsequent investigation.

Mr Dean said the issue was more suited to an Integrity Commission investigation because it might have involved a breach of the State Service Act and codes of conduct rather than criminal offences.

Mr Frame said the police review had been given to the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment.

The fox eradication effort — which involved the laying of 1080 baits across the state — never found a live fox or one that had died after eating baits.

Primary Industries and Water Minister Jeremy Rockliff said yesterday the department would examine the information from police to determine if further action was required.