

Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee

Inquiry into the impact of Defence training activities and facilities on rural and regional communities – 12 July 2017

ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Defence

Topic: Shoalwater Bay Environmental Advisory Board

Question reference number: 3

Senator: Back

Type of question: asked on Wednesday, 12 July 2017, Hansard page 55

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 31 August 2017

Question:

Senator BACK: And in looking at that I would certainly strongly recommend that you take on board the evidence of a few minutes ago from Mr Thompson. It seems to me that it would lend itself to an Indigenous Land Use Agreement to include Indigenous people who speak for that country as well. My final question comes back to the evidence that you were listening to this morning. It seems that, especially for Mr Reilly or whoever holds that position, if that position is to be effective, some form of a local regional consultative standing committee of local government people, local industry people et cetera—probably chaired by that position—would go a long way to allaying the fears and improving community consultation across a range of areas, even if all those at the table weren't there for every discussion every time. Do you agree with that?

Brig. Bayliss: At the moment, we're trying to use existing committees and working groups. Currently, Shoalwater Bay has a standing environmental advisory board. I've got members of my team who sit on that board. That's a forum which has pastoralists, as well as people involved with the management of Shoalwater Bay and local industry. I think there is existing—

CHAIR: Can we get the membership and meeting schedule of that committee? I ask that because my information is that it hasn't met in quite some time.

Brig. Bayliss: There were meetings earlier this year, but I'll get that for you.

Senator MOORE: Can you also give us information on the appointment process?

Brig. Bayliss: Yes.

Answer:

The Shoalwater Bay Training Area Environmental Advisory Committee was a recommendation of the 1994 *Commonwealth Commission of Inquiry into the Shoalwater Bay Training Area*.

The current membership includes those members recommended by the Commission of Inquiry, incorporating representatives from:

- Department of Defence, including:
 - Estate Services Division, including the Regional Environment and Sustainability Officer;
 - Directorate of Operations and Training Area Management, including
 - Training area management staff and Singapore Unilateral Training Exercises Support;
 - Australia Singapore Military Training Initiative;
 - Contracted Estate Maintenance and Operations Services support; and
 - Other Defence attendees as required;
- Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority;
- Queensland Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing;
- Queensland Department of Environment and Heritage Protection;
- Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries;
- Livingstone Shire Council;
- Rockhampton Regional Council;
- Fitzroy Basin Association;
- Darumbal family group representatives;
- Sibelco as a neighbouring mining interest;
- HQPlantations Pty Ltd as a neighbouring forestry interest;
- Infofish Australia as a fishing industry representative;
- Neighbouring landholder as a representative for neighbouring private properties and grazing interests;
- Capricorn Conservation Council representing environmental conservation interests; and
- Central Queensland University.

While the membership of the Shoalwater Bay Training Area Environmental Advisory Committee was initially based on the Commission of Inquiry recommendations, membership has expanded as other interested parties have sought to participate, and when Defence has initiated a major development of interest such as the Australia Singapore Military Training Initiative. Additional Defence attendees also present information on relevant capital facilities developments and major training activities as required.

The Shoalwater Bay Training Area Environmental Advisory Committee was established in 1998 and now meets twice per year. The most recent meeting was on 9 March 2017, and the next meeting is scheduled to occur on 4 October 2017.