

Department of Agriculture and Water Resources

Committee inquiry: Joint Standing Committee on Treaties

Date Held: 29 February 2016

Question Taken on Notice

Ms Melissa Price MP asked officers appearing as witnesses at the Agreement on Strengthening Implementation of the Niue Treaty on Cooperation in Fisheries Surveillance and Law Enforcement in the South Pacific hearing held on 29 February 2016, the following questions which were taken on notice:

Ms PRICE: *Can you give us some idea of what resources, financial or otherwise, Australia is obliged to contribute to the running of the agency?*

Mr Thompson: *The forum fisheries agency operates with membership fees from each of the participants, but the bulk of its income—I do not think I have the exact numbers with me—comes from a grant from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and its New Zealand equivalent. A large part of their budget also comes from an aid budget from the EU, who also have an interest in sustainable fishing in the region. I could get back to you on the break-up of FFA's budget. It is not a secret. It is of the order of tens of millions.*

Ms PRICE: *I guess that is what we were looking for.*

- Australia's core funding agreement with the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) is for \$AUD 22.7 million, over the period January 2013 to June 2018, with funding of \$5 million per year from 2015-16. Australia's core funding agreement is inclusive of Australia's membership contributions (estimated \$USD 634,782 for 2015-16).
- In 2015-16, Australia's funding was approximately 14 percent of FFA's budgeted income and 30 percent of donor income.
- As at April 2015, FFA's budgeted consolidated income for 2015-16 was \$26 million. This consists of member country contributions of 6.5 percent, donor contributions 51.9 percent, Australia's US Tuna Treaty payments 0.9 percent, FFA Vessel Registration fees 16.4 percent, Administered US Tuna Treaty Funds 13.4 percent, Program Support 1.7 percent, Miscellaneous & Interest 0.9 percent, Housing Fund Income 5.1 percent, UST Levy 1.2 percent and Reserves 2.1 percent.
- Australian government agencies also collaborate with FFA in delivering enhanced support for combatting Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing in collaboration, including through the new Defence led Pacific Maritime Security Program and a DAWR led partnership (\$2.4 million over 3 years ending June 2017) supporting the implementation of the Niue Treaty Subsidiary Agreement, development of catch documentation scheme options and monitoring, control and surveillance training.