

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2015

Agriculture

Question: 122

Division/Agency: Grains Research and Development Corporation

Topic: CSIRO investment

Proof Hansard page: 98 (25.5.2015)

Senator GALLACHER asked:

Senator GALLACHER: In relation to the CSIRO, what is the scope and the size of the interaction? I think you partner with the CSIRO on research projects?

Mr Harvey: To give you an indication, CSIRO is one of our major research partners. To give you a rough idea, between somewhere about 10 to 20 per cent of our total investment would be through CSIRO.

Senator GALLACHER: So we are talking about \$35 million or something else?

Mr Harvey: It would probably be a bit less than that. It would probably be about \$20 million to \$25 million. If you want me to give accurate numbers, I will need to take that on notice.

Answer:

Grains Research and Development Corporation has invested \$206 million directly with the CSIRO from 2002-03 until 2013-14.

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2015

Agriculture

Question: 123

Division/Agency: Grains Research and Development Corporation

Topic: Office space

Proof Hansard page: 100 (25.5.2015)

CHAIR asked:

Mr Harvey: Again, this is an issue that I think you flagged at the inquiry may come up. I have some comments that I would like to make about the accommodation. Firstly, when we moved into our previous accommodation, which was in 1998, we had a total of 30 staff. We were spending \$80 million. We currently have a staff of 79. We are spending \$165 million this year. It will be \$190 million on R&D. We have also become much more involved in the actual delivery of that research directly to growers. When I first started in GRDC, which was about 16 or 17 years ago, when we invested in research, we expected, and the departments generally did, provide the extension for free. We would invest in research and the extension was done by the state departments. These days, there is only 85 extension people across the whole of Australia servicing the grains industry. Increasingly, we are actually doing that delivery of research results ourselves. Increasingly, we have been doing that centrally out of Canberra because of the web based technologies. So we got to the point where we had three people in rooms that were designed for one person. We ended up in a situation where the only meeting room in the whole premises could occupy eight people. We were spending obviously a lot of time and money outsourcing office space.

CHAIR: How many square metres was that?

Mr Harvey: Look, Senator, I can dig that up for you. It was around 1,600 square metres, but do not hold me to that. I would need to check it and take it on notice.

CHAIR: So 1,600 square metres?

Mr Harvey: Yes.

CHAIR: That is nearly half an acre.

Mr Harvey: That is 1,600 square metres, roughly.

CHAIR: Nearly half an acre.

Answer:

Net lettable area is 1376 square metres.

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2015

Agriculture

Question: 124

Division/Agency: Grains Research and Development Corporation

Topic: Sublease caveat

Proof Hansard page: 101 (25.5.2015)

The CHAIR asked:

CHAIR: So is your lease subject to a sublease caveat?

Mr Harvey: Look, that might be a question that I am best to pass to my colleague, Ms Howitt.

Ms Howitt: I would have to take that on notice. I am not sure about the clauses for sublease

Answer:

Yes. There are specific clauses relating to the nature and condition of sublease.

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2015

Agriculture

Question: 125

Division/Agency: Grains Research and Development Corporation

Topic: Wages

Proof Hansard page: 104 (25.5.2015)

Senator CAMERON asked:

CHAIR: What is the average wage?

Ms Howitt: I do not think I have that on me at the moment. I will take that on notice.

Senator CAMERON: Can you do me a breakdown on that, on notice, as to what these figures are?

Ms Howitt: I can give you an estimate for each of them. As you would understand, these are estimates.

Senator CAMERON: That would be handy, to know what is happening.

Ms Howitt: Sure.

Senator CAMERON: If you could break down those increases, in those various areas—why you have budgeted-in the increase, which is three, six, nine, 12—but 14 or 15 per cent—

Answer:

Breakdown of GRDC Budget Statements (Table 3.2.1) as per the Portfolio Budget Statements 2015-16, Budget Related Paper no. 1.1, Agriculture Portfolio, all figures are in the table below:

	2014-15 \$'000	2015-16 \$'000	2016-17 \$'000	2017-18 \$'000	2018-19 \$'000
GRDC Total Employee Benefits per PBS	11 100	11 535	11 939	12 357	12 789
Based on prior year total employee benefits (PBS)		11 100	11 535	11 939	12 357
Estimated Bonus		416	432	447	463
Estimated paypoint progression and productivity increase		388	404	417	432

Estimated Vacancy rate		-369	-432	-447	-463
Total		11 535	11 939	12 356	12 789

Average wage is \$117 000 per annum.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2015

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Question: 126

Division/Agency: Grains Research and Development Corporation

Topic: Specialised and non-specialised staff

Proof Hansard page: 104 (25.5.2015)

Senator CAMERON asked:

Mr Harvey: As I said before the meal break, we are quite a specialised technical and professional staff in GRDC. That is reflected in the classification system we have and how it works. Clearly, we have a large number of people with PhDs, people who have a good technical understanding of the various areas we are investing in—for example, molecular biology, genetics, farming systems, soils or crop protection. We have a certain group in our organisation that is highly skilled, from a technical point of view. Likewise, we have increasingly commercial skills and legal skills. That is also reflected in the classification system we have. In terms of the detail, we can certainly provide you with that on notice.

Senator CAMERON: So these are all tertiary educated.

Mr Harvey: Largely.

Senator CAMERON: Can you give me a rough estimate of how many non-specialised people you would have in the department? If you cannot, you can take it on notice.

Mr Harvey: It is probably safer to take it on notice.

Senator CAMERON: Just give me a generality on that.

Mr Harvey: Sure.

Answer:

60 GRDC staff are specialised and 16 are non-specialised.

94 per cent of GRDC staff have a tertiary qualification.

At least 20 per cent have a PhD.

At least 25 per cent have a Masters degree.

More than 60 per cent have a Bachelors degree.