

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

Agriculture

Question: 149

Division/Agency: Agricultural Productivity Division/ Meat & Livestock Australia

Topic: Work done with LSS

Proof Hansard page: 42

Senator STERLE asked:

Senator STERLE: What about the LSS? Do you have anything to do with them?

Mr Hansen: The supply chain LSS is one of the major exporters out of Australia and as such have had—

Senator STERLE: Have you guys had any involvement with them?

Mr Hansen: Over a long period of time.

Senator STERLE: So how did they break down? What happened?

Mr Hansen: Again, I might go to the department in terms of the investigation that they are undertaking.

Senator STERLE: No, I am asking you. You have delivered the training. You have just sat there and told us how great MLA is, and that is fantastic, but you are working with that mob over there and something went wrong.

Mr Hansen: What I said was that we come in when we are invited by supply chains to do gap analyses to identify—

Senator STERLE: Well there is a gap there. Have you been invited in there?

Mr Hansen: I would have to take on notice the question of what specific work we have done with LSS. Dr Barnard might have the answer. Alternatively, our co-partners may—

Senator STERLE: It would be good to know, because the more times we have Animals Australia providing that sort of footage—I do not know how much it is going to take for the industry to realise. All it does is damage the poor growers and producers.

Answer:

The Department of Agriculture regulates ESCAS and it is investigating complaints in various countries in the Middle East region.

Exporters are responsible for adhering to ESCAS requirements.

In 2012-13 and 2013-14 YTD the MLA/LiveCorp Livestock Export Program provided the following services at LSS request: 125 training days, 66 technical advice days and 9 gap analysis days, in Jordan, Egypt, Israel, Qatar and UAE.

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Agriculture

Question: 150

Division/Agency: Agricultural Productivity Division/ Meat & Livestock Australia

Topic: Assisting LSS

Proof Hansard page: 42

Senator STERLE asked:

Has LSS asked you to come in to assist with their gap?

Dr Barnard: We have certainly done some work with LSS. I can, on notice, provide you with details.

Answer:

LSS has requested support from the MLA/LiveCorp Livestock Export Program (LEP). In 2012-13 and 2013-14 YTD LEP has provided 9 days gap analysis support in Jordan, Egypt, Israel and Qatar.

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

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Agriculture

Question: 151

Division/Agency: Agricultural Productivity Division/ Meat & Livestock Australia

Topic: Invitation by supply chains

Proof Hansard page: 42

Senator STERLE asked:

This is since October or is it since 1 June—the problem we had then?

Dr Barnard: We worked in Jordan during Eid, so that was October.

Senator STERLE: So you have come in after the second drama. You were not asked, Dr Barnard, by LSS—

Dr Barnard: We are always invited in by supply chains.

Senator STERLE: So we had the first issue in Jordan with LSS but they did not invite you in until the second issue—or just before the second?

Dr Barnard: I will have to take that on notice.

Answer:

The Livestock Export Program has provided support to Livestock Shipping Services in Jordan within the following 3 periods in 2013:

- 1/06/2013 to 7/06/2013
- 13/09/2013 to 20/09/2013
- 6/10/2013 to 16/10/2013.

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Agriculture

Question: 152

Division/Agency: Agricultural Productivity Division/ Meat and Livestock Australia

Topic: Current work with LSS

Proof Hansard page: 42-43

Senator RHIANNON asked:

Senator STERLE: Can you bring us up to speed with where you are with LSS? Are you still working with them?

Dr Barnard: We work with supply chains on an invitation basis. Again, I will take on notice what current work we are doing in these markets. I just do not have the details of current work we are doing with LSS.

Senator RHIANNON: Can you take on notice, specifically, LSS?

Dr Barnard: Yes, definitely.

Answer:

In 2012-13 and 2013-14 YTD the Meat & Livestock Australia/LiveCorp Livestock Export Program provided the following services at LSS request: 125 training days, 66 technical advice days and 9 gap analysis days, in Jordan, Egypt, Israel, Qatar and UAE.

Services provided since June 2013 include training, technical advice and gap analysis services in Egypt, Jordan, Qatar and Israel.

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Question: 153

Division/Agency: Agricultural Productivity Division/ Meat & Livestock Australia

Topic: Specific breakdown of the work with LSS

Proof Hansard page: 43

Senator STERLE asked:

Senator LINES: You told me you work in three areas—supply chains was one, and looking at gap analysis and training. What is the third?

Mr Hansen: The provision of technical assistance—not necessarily training—when asked for from the trade. Different supply chains ask for differing degrees of information. They will ask for differing information or differing assistance at different times throughout the year. All of our in-field activities are co-funded activities through the Livestock Export program with LiveCorp. I do not know whether Sam has, at his fingertips, our work with LSS, or the joint program's work with LSS—otherwise we will just take that on notice.

Mr Brown: I am sorry, I do not have the specific breakdown of the work with LSS. As Scott has mentioned, we work with all our members.

Senator STERLE: But you can provide that? Is that possible?

Mr Hansen: Yes, it is not a problem.

Answer:

In 2012-13 and 2013-14 YTD the Meat and Livestock Australia /LiveCorp Livestock Export Program provided the following services at LSS request: 125 training days, 66 technical advice days and 9 gap analysis days, in Jordan, Egypt, Israel, Qatar and UAE.

Services provided since June 2013 include training, technical advice and gap analysis services in Egypt, Jordan, Qatar and Israel.

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Agriculture

Question: 154

Division/Agency: Agricultural Productivity Division/ Meat & Livestock Australia

Topic: Aboriginal Australians working as stockmen or stockwomen

Proof Hansard page: 43

Senator LINES asked:

What proportion of those stockmen and stockwomen are Aboriginal Australians? Is that a statistic you collect?

Mr Hansen: It is not and it is not one I would have off the top of my head. Again, we could take that on notice, but I do not know that off the top of my head.

Senator LINES: Does your department have a particular percentage of Aboriginal Australians whom you would encourage to work as stockmen or stockwomen?

Mr Hansen: Again, I would have to take that on notice as to whether the company has any targets or any set programs around that area.

Senator LINES: Does anybody else know? It seems extraordinary that nobody knows whether you have employment targets or not.

Mr Galvin: Without having those details, I know that on previous occasions there have been Indigenous specific courses run in Broome for Indigenous stockmen et cetera, with the final outcome being for them to participate in the trade. But I do not have any of those firm details.

Senator LINES: But that is an initiative of the WA ag department, isn't it?

Mr Galvin: I think it is a combined initiative. LiveCorp was running those courses out there, so—

Senator LINES: Sorry, just to be clear if you are taking my question on notice, what I wanted to know was what percentage of Aboriginal Australians you employ as trainers.

Answer:

Human resources working in the LEP are recruited and allocated based on merit. MLA does not collect information on the ethnicity of employees.

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Agriculture

Question: 155

Division/Agency: Agricultural Productivity Division/ Meat & Livestock Australia

Topic: Leakage had occurred from Jordan to Lebanon

Proof Hansard page: 44-45

Senator RHIANNON asked:

So you are stating that David Beatty did not tell you or that you are not aware of what he saw?

Dr Barnard: I can only answer this question honestly and I can only say that, to my knowledge and memory, David Beatty supplied no information of a conclusive nature that leakage had occurred from Jordan to Lebanon.

Senator RHIANNON: Can we just unpackage that. You said 'to your memory'; does that mean you need to take that on notice so you can check?

Dr Barnard: I am happy to take it on notice.

Dr Barnard: I think I have answered the question adequately, Senator. I am happy to take it on notice and supply you with further information, but I have in all honesty and to the best of my ability answered the question honestly.

Senator RHIANNON: Thank you.

Answer:

David Beatty supplied no information of a conclusive nature that leakage had occurred from Jordan to Lebanon. He visited Lebanon for the purpose of gap analysis for another stakeholder and has reported he saw nothing to verify that livestock were leaking from Jordan to Lebanon.

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Question: 156

Division/Agency: Agricultural Productivity Division/ Meat & Livestock Australia

Topic: Festival of sacrifice

Proof Hansard page: 46

Senator RHIANNON asked:

Did Meat and Livestock Australia instruct consultant Blythe Calnan to depart Kuwait the day prior to the Festival of Sacrifice?

Mr Galvin: Blythe was, as she was a year before, allocated to Qatar, where she has done a magnificent job. I was there with her on both occasions. She is a credit to young Australian rural people. I think she won the Cattle Council Young Australian of the Year. She was tasked to Qatar.

Senator RHIANNON: So are you are saying that she had nothing to do with Kuwait?

Mr Galvin: I do not know. I was only in Qatar. I was with her in Qatar.

Senator RHIANNON: Do I need to put it on notice, if you are not aware if she is working in Kuwait.

Mr Hansen: We will take it on notice. Blythe works regularly across the Middle East. We can look at where she was at what stage.

Senator RHIANNON: Could you add this to take on notice, please? If she was removed, why would you remove a consultant the day prior to when animals were at greatest risk?

Dr Barnard: It was a matter of assigning resources across a region, Senator. We had resources assigned to Kuwait, resources assigned to Qatar, resources assigned to other areas of the Middle East during Eid. My LiveCorp colleagues were across there during Eid, so could provide you with details of the assignment of those resources.

Answer:

Meat and Livestock Australia did not instruct consultant Blythe Calnan to depart Kuwait the day prior to Eid.

Blythe Calnan was in Oman from 22 September to 10 October for industry's Eid al Adha planning and preparation and then in Qatar from 11 – 17 October 2013 for preparation and for the delivery of the LEP's Eid al Adha program. Her total time allocated to the Eid al Adha program was 24 days. She was not in Kuwait prior to, or during, Eid al Adha 2013.

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Agriculture

Question: 157

Division/Agency: Agricultural Productivity Division/ Meat & Livestock Australia

Topic: ESCAS auditing system

Proof Hansard page: 46

Senator RHIANNON asked :

Could you take on notice: in these festivals, what Meat and Livestock Australia and LiveCorp staff are located where and for what periods—just for this year? And then a Turkey question: did the Meat and Livestock Australia receive a letter from an Meat and Livestock Australia consultant in 2012 refusing to work in Turkey due to the corruption of the ESCAS auditing system by parties connected to Livestock Shipping Services or their parent company Hijazi and Ghosheh?

Mr Hansen: Certainly not that I have seen. We can take that on notice as well.

Answer:

Kuwait – supporting Eid al Adha program

Staff: 24-26 August, 24-27 September and 13-17 October.

Consultants: 24 September – 18 October

Oman - supporting Eid al Adha program

Staff: 22 – 23 September, 8-10 October, 12-17 October

Consultants: 22 September – 18 October

Jordan - supporting Eid Al Adha program

Staff: 10-13 September.

Consultants: 13-19 September, 6-17 October

Qatar - supporting Eid al Adha program

Staff: 4-5 September and 14-17 October.

Consultants: 4-5 September, 11-17 October.

Question: 157 (continued)

Malaysia - supporting Korban program

Staff: 11-16 October.

Consultants: 8-16 October

Singapore - supporting Korban program

Staff: 13-16 October.

Consultants: 13-16 October

Meat and Livestock Australia did not receive a letter from any Meat and Livestock Australia consultant in 2012 refusing to work in Turkey.

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Question: 158

Division/Agency: Agricultural Productivity Division/ Meat & Livestock Australia

Topic: Funds spent by MLA

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator WILLIAMS asked:

How much levy payer and Government funds has the MLA spent since it was incorporated in 1998?

Answer:

Since 1998 Meat and Livestock Australia has invested \$1.15b cattle, sheep and goat levy funds in marketing and research and development programs and activities, and \$482m Government funds in R&D.

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Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

Agriculture

Question: 159

Division/Agency: Agricultural Productivity Division/ Meat & Livestock Australia

Topic: Real Cattle prices

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator WILLIAMS asked:

What was the average percentage of annual decline in real cattle prices in the decade before the MLA was incorporated

Answer:

Between 1987-88 and 1997-98, average weighted cattle prices (in 2012-13 dollars) declined 36.3%. The average percentage of annual decline (average of year-on-year changes over the period) was 3.8%.

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Agriculture

Question: 160

Division/Agency: Agricultural Productivity Division/ Meat & Livestock Australia

Topic: Annual decline in real cattle prices

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator WILLIAMS asked:

What has been the average percentage of annual decline in real cattle prices since the MLA was incorporated?

Answer:

Between 1997-98 and 2012-13, average weighted cattle prices (in 2012-13 dollars) increased 12.8%. The average percentage of annual change (average of year-on-year changes over the period) was a 2.1% increase.

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Agriculture

Question: 161

Division/Agency: Agricultural Productivity Division/ Meat & Livestock Australia

Topic: Cattle prices

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator WILLIAMS asked:

Were cattle prices in real terms received by cattle producers worse in 2013 than during the cattle price crash of 1974?

Answer:

In 2012-13, the average weighted cattle price received by producers was estimated at 297¢/kg cwt, higher in real terms than prices registered during the 1970's crash – 232¢/kg cwt in 1974-75, 213¢/kg cwt in 1975-76 and 238¢/kg cwt in 1976-77 (in 2012-13 dollars).

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Agriculture

Question: 162

Division/Agency: Agricultural Productivity Division/ Meat & Livestock Australia

Topic: Expenditure on MSA

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator WILLIAMS asked:

How much has the MLA spent on MSA since 1998?

Answer:

Meat and Livestock Australia has invested \$93.8m on MSA, which includes R&D, marketing, implementation and audit costs since 1998. In 2012-13, 2.4 million head of cattle were graded under the MSA program, underpinning some of the most successful beef brands.

Price premiums offered on MSA yearling cattle across all categories last year averaged 28 cents per kg and totalled over \$170m to producers. In a 2012 consumer survey, 79% rated the quality of beef they buy 7/10 or higher.

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Agriculture

Question: 163

Division/Agency: Agricultural Productivity Division/ Meat & Livestock Australia

Topic: Decline in beef consumption

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator WILLIAMS asked:

What was the average annual percentage of decline in Australian beef consumption per capita between 1980 and 1996?

Answer:

Based on ABARES data (Agricultural Commodity Statistics 2012), beef consumption per capita declined from 45.3kg/head to 39.3kg/head between 1980 and 1996 – down 13.3%. The average percentage of annual decline (average of year-on-year changes over the period) was 0.6%.

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Agriculture

Question: 164

Division/Agency: Agricultural Productivity Division/ Meat & Livestock Australia

Topic: Decline in Australian beef consumption

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator WILLIAMS asked:

What has been the average annual percentage of decline in Australian beef consumption since MSA was launched in 1999?

Answer:

Based on ABARES data (Agricultural Commodity Statistics 2012), beef consumption per capita declined from 37.9kg/head to 32.8kg/head between 1999 and 2011 – down 13.2%. The average percentage of annual decline (average of year-on-year changes over the period) was 1.1%.

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Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

Agriculture

Question: 165

Division/Agency: Agricultural Productivity Division/Meat and Livestock Australia

Topic: Lowest cattle prices

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator WILLIAMS asked:

Which country (or countries) out of Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada, Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, Paraguay, Japan and the European Union has the lowest cattle prices?

Answer:

The lowest cattle prices over the 2013 Jan-Oct calendar year period are Brazil, NZ and Paraguay, followed by Australia. Please note the cattle categories available for comparison for each market below the table.

Monthly average cattle prices - USc /kg - lwt

2013	Aust	US	Argentina	Brazil	Uruguay	Paraguay	NZ	Canada	EU	Japan
Jan	178	276.8	199.8	160.2	203.3	171.4	164.5	258.2	284.4	225.2
Feb	189	273.8	219.5	165.7	203.4	182.8	161.9	256.9	287.1	217.0
Mar	194	278.9	208.8	165.1	205.6	179.8	154.7	253.4	294.8	217.3
Apr	186	280.8	202.3	166.5	201.4	167.3	163.0	252.8	299.9	218.1
May	169	279.3	194.3	160.5	200.1	164.3	167.0	266.4	286.9	217.2
Jun	170	269.9	196.7	151.7	194.1	162.8	164.0	271.3	294.5	230.2
Jul	175	265.0	186.2	151.6	196.3	170.8	169.7	267.5	303.5	226.2
Aug	174	270.5	187.5	144.2	201.0	160.8	176.5	268.3	298.5	230.5
Sep	175	271.9	178.0	158.1	193.4	167.8	189.3	262.4	298.8	230.4
Oct	171	285.6	179.4	167.3	192.8	181.4	189.0	265.9	302.2	240.5
Average CYTD	178	275	195	159	199	171	170	262	295	225

** New Zealand, Japan and EU cattle price converted to lwt using a 53% dressing percentage

Australia - trade steer (330-400 kg lwt)

Brazil Steer Price SP state;

Argentina Steer (390 - 430 kg lwt);

Uruguay Steer (380kg lwt);

New Zealand over the hook price – heavy export steer (295 to 320 kg cwt);

US - choice steer average weight 390 kg cwe

Canada - steer average weight 397 kg cwe

Japan - Dairy beef steer average weight 433 kg cwe (typically on feed for 16 months)

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Question: 166

Division/Agency: Agricultural Productivity Division/ Meat & Livestock Australia

Topic: Lowest price per beast

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator WILLIAMS asked:

Which country (or countries) out of Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada, Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, Paraguay, Japan or the European Union has the lowest price per beast as a percentage of the nation's minimum wage?

Answer:

Meat and Livestock Australia does not gather or store data on minimum wages.

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Agriculture

Question: 167

Division/Agency: Agricultural Productivity Division/ Meat & Livestock Australia

Topic: Australian beef producing industry

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator WILLIAMS asked:

Has the profitability of the Australian beef producing industry improved since the MLA was incorporated in 1998? Please provide figures.

Answer:

Based on ABARES data, average farm cash income for specialist beef producers was \$71,936 per farm in 2011-12 compared with \$31,640 in 1997-98 (all in 2011-12 dollars). Average farm business profit, was \$17,266 per farm in 2011-12 compared with negative -\$29,957 per farm in 1997-98 (all in 2011-12 dollars).

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Agriculture

Question: 168

Division/Agency: Agricultural Productivity Division/ Meat & Livestock Australia

Topic: Beef producer debt

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator WILLIAMS asked:

What has the percentage rise in beef producer debt as a percentage of gross production value been since the MLA was incorporated in 1998?

Answer:

Based on ABARES data for specialist beef producers, the ratio of average debt carried per farm to the average receipts generated per farm has risen by 40% from a ratio of around 0.9 in 1997-98 to 1.2 in 2011-12.

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

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Question: 169

Division/Agency: Meat & Livestock Australia

Topic: Data sharing

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator XENOPHON asked:

It was reported in The Australian in late October that MLA is considering selling data collected through the National Livestock Identification System. MLA has since stated that it will not sell information without the express permission of the farmer involved. Can the MLA advise:

- Whether any of the information already collected through the NLIS has been passed on or sold to any other entity or organisation?
- Whether there are plans to get the express permission of farmers so that information can be sold?
- Whether there will be benefits (financial or otherwise) provided to farmers who agree to the sale of their data?

Answer:

Disclosures by National Livestock Identification System Limited of information from the National Livestock Identification System database is in accordance with the National Livestock Identification System Terms of Use.

National Livestock Identification System Limited adheres strictly to privacy laws and the Terms of Use, and no National Livestock Identification System data has been or would be provided to a third party without the producer's consent except in accordance with these.

Disclosure of information may be required by law or for specialised research projects that meet strict criteria and are approved by the National Livestock Identification System Cattle Advisory Committee and SAFEMEAT.

National Livestock Identification System data has, in accordance with the Terms of Use, been provided in response to subpoenas issued in relation to third party court proceedings and has otherwise been approved to be provided to research organisations under strict protocols for projects where a benefit to industry was established. Strict protocols required the data to be aggregated when published and all the information had to be carefully stored and deleted at the conclusion of the study. The National Livestock Identification System cattle advisory committee, which is made up of producer representative bodies, government and National

Question: 169 (continued)

Livestock Identification System management, advises the National Livestock Identification System Ltd Board on National Livestock Identification System Ltd operations

National Livestock Identification System has been piloting the functionality of restricted third party account access to National Livestock Identification System accounts with a small number of financial institutions and producers since 2008. All producers in the pilot have granted permission for the financial institution to receive information about their livestock when they leave the property for sale or slaughter. This aims to provide a benefit to producers through more favourable financing options when seeking a mortgage against their livestock. No data is sold to third parties.

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Agriculture

Question: 170

Division/Agency: Agricultural Productivity Division/ Meat & Livestock Australia

Topic: Update on work undertaken to establish ESCAS

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator STERLE asked:

Can you update the committee on the work being undertaken by MLA to establish ESCAS in overseas markets?

Answer:

On request Meat and Livestock Australia in partnership with LiveCorp through the Livestock Export Program (LEP), provides resources to assist supply chains understand and implement ESCAS.

The LEP focusses on four key areas, including Animal Health and Welfare; Supply Chain Efficiency; Industry Communications and Market Access & Trade Development. Within the Animal Health and Welfare program, there are three key areas of support:

1. Training
2. Technical advice
3. Gap/Risk analysis

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Question: 171

Division/Agency: Agricultural Productivity Division/ Meat & Livestock Australia

Topic: Operational ESCAS exporter

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator STERLE asked:

Has MLA identified any gaps or potential shortcomings with operational ESCAS exporter?

Answer:

Whenever support activities under the LEP are undertaken, Meat and Livestock Australia reports back to the relevant supply chain operators on the outcomes of the program delivered, including recommendations on improving operations and performance and any issues or risks identified.

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Question: 172

Division/Agency: Agricultural Productivity Division/ Meat & Livestock Australia

Topic: Processing skills

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator STERLE asked:

Detail of the training and technical advice, procedures relating to infrastructure design, animal handling and animal processing skills.

Answer:

Training is mainly in stock handling and slaughter. Technical advice is mainly in relation to abattoir improvement, feedlot nutrition and animal health. Infrastructure design is targeted at ESCAS compliance.

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Question: 173

Division/Agency: Agricultural Productivity Division/ Meat & Livestock Australia

Topic: ESCAS compliant supply chains

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator STERLE asked:

Provide information about risk analyses on operational ESCAS-compliant supply chains to identify and address problems before non-compliances occur.

Answer:

Consultants conduct risk analysis upon request of exporters/importers. This is mainly in abattoirs. The process is aimed at identifying issues to mitigate risk of non-compliance; eg infrastructure maintenance and handling and slaughter practices.

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Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

Agriculture

Question: 174

Division/Agency: Agricultural Productivity Division/ Meat & Livestock Australia

Topic: Countries which have officers or consultants

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator STERLE asked:

Which countries does MLA have officers or consultants in?

Answer:

Meat and Livestock Australia staff and consultants periodically work in Bahrain, Brunei, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Malaysia, Mauritius, Oman, Philippines, Qatar, Turkey, UAE, Egypt, Russia, Singapore and Vietnam. Meat and Livestock Australia has offices in Jakarta and Dubai.

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

Agriculture

Question: 175

Division/Agency: Agricultural Productivity Division/ Meat & Livestock Australia

Topic: Deficiencies in supply chains

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator STERLE asked:

If Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) officers or their consultants observe deficiencies in supply chains they should report this to ESCAS and encourage immediate rectification and reporting.

Answer:

Whenever activities under the LEP are undertaken, Meat and Livestock Australia reports back to the relevant supply chain operators on the outcomes of the program delivered, including recommendations on improving operations and performance and any issues or risks identified. In the event that ESCAS non-conformities were observed by Meat and Livestock Australia staff and contractors the report would also note these non-conformities. It is the legal responsibility of the exporter to report any ESCAS breaches to the Department of Agriculture. For non-conformities of a serious nature witnessed by Meat and Livestock Australia, Meat and Livestock Australia would ensure that the Department of Agriculture was informed of the non-conformity.

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Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

Agriculture

Question: 176

Division/Agency: Agricultural Productivity Division/ Meat & Livestock Australia

Topic: ESCAS compliance reporting and training

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator RHIANNON asked:

1. Did MLA report to the Department of Agriculture that it was aware of widespread and systemic breaches of ESCAS relating to on-selling of animals occurring in Jordan?
2. Has MLA viewed the approved abattoir in Palestine?
 - a) Has MLA been requested to provide any training in this facility?
3. How many days training have MLA consultants undertaken in importing markets over 2013 AND which countries have MLA consultants travelled to in order to undertake training or gap analysis?
4. I understand that MLA has been reticent to report non-compliances within approved supply chains on the basis of believing action can be taken through training to address them. But where MLA becomes aware of Australian animals being sold outside of approved supply chains - will you commit to reporting these matters to the Department to ensure that action is taken to address this situation?

If not, why not?

Answer:

1. No. Meat and Livestock Australia consultants were working only in approved facilities in Jordan, preparing systems for the Eid festival.
2. There are currently six ESCAS approved abattoirs in the Israel/Palestinian Territories (as of 3 October). Meat and Livestock Australia in partnership with LiveCorp through the Livestock Export Program (LEP), has been requested to provide training in Bakar Tnuva Abattoir, Dabbah Abattoir and Salech Dabach slaughterhouse.
3. YTD to the end of October 2013, MLA consultants have spent a total of 231 days in MENA, 141 days in Indonesia and 100 days in Other Asia markets. This includes training related activities ranging from formal to informal programs through to seminars and workshops. In 2013 training or gap analysis has been delivered in Brunei, Egypt, Indonesia, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Malaysia, Mauritius, Oman, Philippines, Qatar, Russia, Singapore, UAE and Vietnam.
4. Whenever activities under the LEP are undertaken, Meat and Livestock Australia reports back to the relevant supply chain operators on the outcomes of the program delivered, including recommendations on improving operations and performance and any issues

Question: 176 (continued)

or risks identified. In the event that ESCAS non-conformities were observed by Meat and Livestock Australia staff and contractors the report would also note these non-conformities. It is the legal responsibility of the exporter to report any ESCAS breaches to the Department of Agriculture. For non-conformities of a serious nature witnessed by Meat and Livestock Australia, Meat and Livestock Australia would ensure that the Department of Agriculture was informed of the non-conformity.

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

Agriculture

Question: 177

Division/Agency: Agricultural Productivity Division/ Meat & Livestock Australia

Topic: Research and Development

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator RHIANNON asked:

1. May I please have the following information regarding the period 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014:
 - a) The total government funds budgeted for payment to match funding for levy investment in Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA) Research & Development projects?
 - b) How many projects have been funded to date?
 - c) How many projects have been published in peer reviewed scientific journals?
 - d) How many projects had the welfare of livestock as a primary aim?

What input does the Government have into the selection of R&D projects by MLA?

Answer:

- (a) \$36.1m in Government funding has been budgeted to match levy investment in Meat and Livestock Australia RD&E projects for 2013-14.
- (b) To date 625 projects have been funded in the period 2013-14 using Government funding to match levy investment in Meat and Livestock Australia RD&E projects. This includes ongoing and multi-year projects as well as new projects commenced in 2013-14.
- (c) Since 1 July 2013, 39 final reports for projects using Government funding to match levy investment in Meat and Livestock Australia RD&E projects have been published. Final reports for projects are published and made publically available on the Meat and Livestock Australia website. The findings from Meat and Livestock Australia funded projects can be published in scientific papers. To date in 2013-14, 17 papers have been published. In 2012-13 at least 140 papers were published.
- (d) 45 projects had the welfare of livestock as a primary aim.

Meat and Livestock Australia consults with peak industry councils during the development of the Annual Operating Plan (AOP) which details R&D and Marketing investment. The Department of Agriculture is provided with a draft of the AOP and is given the opportunity to make comments prior to the final version being published.