

**Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

**Agriculture**

**Question:** 357

**Division/Agency:** Trade and Market Access Division

**Topic:** Update on work undertaken on the Indonesia-Australia Red Meat and Cattle Forum

**Proof Hansard page:** Written

**Senator STERLE asked:**

Can you provide the committee with an update on any work undertaken on the Indonesia-Australia Red Meat and Cattle Forum post 7 September 2013?

**Answer:**

Please refer to pages 52 and 53 of Hansard for the Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee Estimates hearing of Tuesday 19 November 2013.

**Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

**Agriculture**

**Question:** 358

**Division/Agency:** Trade and Market Access Division

**Topic:** USA seek access for a product

**Proof Hansard page:** Written

**Senator STERLE asked:**

If the USA seeks access for a product is it possible that the Australian government will determine that that application goes to the back of the queue? What are the trade consequences of such an approach?

**Answer:**

Australian and US officials meet regularly and discuss, amongst other sanitary and phytosanitary issues, priority market access issues. Agencies in both countries progress risk assessments based on this information.

**Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

**Agriculture**

**Question:** 359

**Division/Agency:** Trade and Market Access Division

**Topic:** Overseas Agricultural Specialists

**Proof Hansard page:** Written

**Senator STERLE asked:**

1. How many overseas agricultural specialists does the department currently employ?
  - i. For how long is that funding committed?
  - ii. What markets are they deployed in?

**Answer:**

1. The Department of Agriculture (the department) has thirteen agricultural Counsellors and twenty Locally Engaged Staff (LES) working on agricultural trade and market access. The Department has an additional 5 agricultural officers and 27 LES and casual contractors in Indonesia in support of the Australian aid funded 'Emerging Infectious Diseases Animal Health (EID) Program' delivered by the Department of Agriculture. The department also has 1 LES in Jakarta working on international fisheries, and 1 LES funded by the Department of Agriculture Improved Animal Welfare Program (IAWP).
  - i. The agricultural counsellors and supporting LES are funded from departmental appropriations. The overseas network is reviewed regularly to ensure we maximise the public value of available resources and in response to Government priorities and budgetary constraints. The EID program is funded until December 2014. The IAWP is funded until June 2015.
  - ii. Thailand, Indonesia, India, China, Republic of Korea, Taiwan, Japan, European Union, Russia, Middle East, United States of America, Italy and France.

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**Agriculture**

**Question:** 360

**Division/Agency:** Trade and Market Access Division

**Topic:** Overseas Agricultural Specialists

**Proof Hansard page:** Written

**Senator STERLE asked:**

Will departmental staff living in key markets be affected by the Government staff reductions or stop on recruitment?

**Answer:**

No.

**Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

**Agriculture**

**Question:** 361

**Division/Agency:** Trade and Market Access Division

**Topic:** Australia-Indonesia working group

**Proof Hansard page:** Written

**Senator STERLE asked:**

1. Has the Minister been briefed on the Australia-Indonesia Working Group on Agriculture, Food and Forestry (WGAFFC)?
2. When is the next Australia – Indonesia Ministerial Forum? Will the Minister be attending?
3. What o/s travel has The Minister done to support the trade? What travel will he do? What ambassadors has he spoken to?

**Answer:**

1. The WGAFFC, an officials level forum, has not met since the Minister for Agriculture was appointed.
2. The Minister for Foreign Affairs is responsible for the Australia-Indonesia Ministerial Forum.
3. The Minister has stated that he will travel to Indonesia, accompanied by an industry delegation, at a time that is mutually convenient. He also intends to visit other key markets for Australian agriculture.

The Minister met with the Indonesian Ambassador to Australia on 24 September, the Chinese Ambassador on 30 October, the New Zealand High Commissioner on 12 November and the Japanese Ambassador on 19 November 2013.

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Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

**Agriculture**

**Question:** 362

**Division/Agency:** Trade and Market Access Division

**Topic:** Work program relating to market access matters

**Proof Hansard page:** Written

**Senator STERLE asked:**

1. Can you take the committee through your current work program on matters relating to market access matters?
2. Which are the key markets you are focussing on and in each case what are the matters you are seeking to resolve?

**Answer:**

1. The Trade and Market Access Division within the Department of Agriculture works closely with portfolio industries and other relevant divisions within the department to maintain and improve access in overseas markets for Australia's agriculture, food, fisheries and forestry industries. The division focuses on removing distortions to international trade through multilateral arrangements such as the WTO; working with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to progress free trade agreements; progressing and resolving technical market access issues and facilitating targeted technical assistance and agricultural cooperation. The division also seeks to influence the development of international standards governing animal, plant and human health for portfolio industries, for example, through participating in the WTO's Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (WTO SPS Committee). The department's overseas network of agricultural counsellors forms part of the division and this network is integral to the department's work on trade and market access.
2. The department works closely with portfolio industries to support and grow existing trade for a range of commodities and to achieve access to new markets. Key markets include China; Japan; the United States; Indonesia; the European Union; Middle East and Republic of Korea. The department works on market access and maintenance issues with a range of industry export market access prioritisation groups that cover the agricultural portfolio, including dairy, meat, horticulture, grains, forestry, live animals, reproductive materials and wool. Market access issues change on a regular basis and vary between markets. For example, market access issues with China, Australia's largest agricultural export destination, range from negotiating a free trade agreement to restoring access to canola and seeking new access for kangaroo meat. A list of recent market access issues the division has been involved with can be found on the department's website under the Agriculture Trade Review [www.daff.gov.au/market-access-trade/market-access-news/ag-trade](http://www.daff.gov.au/market-access-trade/market-access-news/ag-trade).

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Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

**Agriculture**

**Question:** 363

**Division/Agency:** Trade and Market Access Division

**Topic:** MOU with China

**Proof Hansard page:** Written

**Senator STERLE asked:**

I understand there is a MOU being negotiated with China. Can you take the committee through the detail of that MOU?

Once agreed what will the MOU mean for access to this important market?

**Answer:**

At the request of China, the department and China's General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine (AQSIQ) agreed on and initialled a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on *'Traceability Management of Australian Meat Products Exported to China'*, during a visit by AQSIQ officials to Australia in October 2013. The MoU provides China with increased confidence in Australia's meat production system. China is requiring all countries exporting meat to that country to have such an agreement.

Separately, the department is negotiating revisions to the Sanitary and Phytosanitary Memorandum of Understanding between AQSIQ and the department. The MOU provides an overarching framework for engaging with AQSIQ on information exchange and cooperation, and establishes the China – Australia Sanitary and Phytosanitary High Level Dialogue (SPS HLD). It was agreed at the 2011 SPS HLD that there would be a joint review of the MOU ahead of the next SPS HLD in 2014. The proposed revisions to the MOU, which have been substantially agreed with China, will enhance engagement and cooperation opportunities under the MOU.