



Australian Government
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry



Ms Jeanette Radcliffe
Secretary
Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Ms Radcliffe

In the course of reviewing comments made by officers of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and portfolio agencies during the Additional Estimate hearings conducted by the Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee on 14 and 16 February 2007, it has been determined that several of the answers provided were not accurate in relation to the specific questions asked.

I would like to note that these errors occurred through not having precise details to hand at the hearings and attempting to answer the Committee's questions, in good faith, from memory. We have since had the opportunity to review the answers provided at the hearings and the following pages present our corrections and/or further information for the consideration of the Committee.

In all cases, where incorrect or incomplete information was supplied at the hearings we sincerely apologise for any misunderstanding that may have arisen as a result. It would be appreciated if these corrections could be brought to the attention of the members of the Committee.

If you have any queries on this matter please contact Ms Nicola Hinder, General Manager, Parliamentary and Media on 6272 5590.

Yours sincerely

Cliff Samson
Deputy Secretary

14/ March 07

Factual Corrections

In answering Senator O'Brien's question (Hansard page 58; 14 February 2006):

Senator O'Brien—So it follows that we do not now trade with Qatar Oman, Bahrain, Iraq, Iran, Israel and Syria?

Mr Burns answered:

Mr Burns —With Oman, Qatar, Bahrain and Israel we are trading but as Ms Gordon Smith said, in one case in particular there has been some reluctance to sign an MOU and in others we have been delayed. In those particular markets we have imposed additional conditions. I do not know the detail of the conditions, but the objective is that the conditions are aimed at trying to get those countries to see the merits of signing onto an MOU.

Mr Burns wishes to clarify the above statement and advise the committee that conditions that are applied to livestock exports by sea are aimed at reducing the risks associated with live export consignments. AQIS is applying the same conditions to all Middle East markets until there is confidence that some conditions can be dispensed for those markets that have signed MoUs.

In answering Senator O'Brien's question (Hansard pages 58 and 59; 14 February 2006):

Senator O'Brien — So you have got them to sign a document to say that they will work towards signing an MOU, have you?

Mr Burns answered:

Mr Burns — Not that they have signed a document. In terms of the conditions for sale that we have imposed, it would be more attractive for those countries to sign an MOU. Of course you will recall post Keniry we had some funding to promote better animal welfare outcomes in the region, amongst other things. Those countries that are receiving some of those benefits are the ones that have signed MOUs.

Refer to Mr Burn's clarification above.

In answering Senator O'Brien's question (Hansard page 68, 14 February 2006):

Senator O'Brien—I want to ask about new product registration. How many new agricultural products would the APVMA register annually?

Dr Smith answered:

Dr Smith— I am going back to the 2005-06 annual report figures. From memory, we finalised about 2,600 and something – I cannot give you the exact number – applications for registration of products. That includes both agricultural and veterinary chemical products and that includes everything from brand-new active constituents never been seen before through to minor variations to existing products. So there is a whole gamut of applications there, but 2,600 is the figure.

Dr Smith wishes to advise the committee that at the hearing his answer was provided from memory however this correction identifies that the APVMA registered 2,260 agricultural and veterinary chemicals products during 2005-06.

In answering Senator O'Brien's question (Hansard page 102; 14 February 2006):

Senator O'Brien— We were told this morning that the ABARE budget for the year has gone up \$0.8m.....as a result of new contracts. What is the sort of work?

Mr Glyde answered:

Mr Glyde —I am sorry, I have misunderstood the question. My apologies. There are three things: increased data sampling of our farm surveys; improving the accuracy of ABARE's farm survey estimates; and doing an economic assessment of adjustment in the wine grape industry.

Mr Glyde wishes to advise the committee the increase in ABARE's external revenue budget by \$0.8m was not linked to any specific projects. This number reflects an anticipated increase in external revenue based on forecasts from ABARE Branches.

Mr Glyde further wishes to advise the committee that both appropriation and budgeted external revenue for ABARE increased by approximately \$0.8m. When Mr Glyde answered the question he was speaking about appropriation. Seeing the context of the question it is clear that Senator O'Brien was asking about external revenue.

In answering Senator O'Brien's question (Hansard page 111; 14 February 2006):

Senator O'Brien— What about forestry managed investment schemes?

Mr Glyde answered

Mr Glyde — Not that I am aware of, no.

Mr Glyde wishes to advise the committee that in 2005, ABARE assisted the Bureau of Rural Sciences in providing information to the Department as input to the review of the taxation of forestry (plantation timber) and he was unaware of ABARE work on this issue.

In answering Senator Nash's question (Hansard page 112; 14 February 2006):

Senator Nash— Part of what it appears you have based the report on is what you term 'perceptions' of consumer resistance to genetically modified grains. Can you just outline what those perceptions are any why you terms them 'perceptions' and why you did not feel that they were more substantive than just a perception?

Mr Glyde answered:

Mr Glyde — rather than a complete survey, so we are getting the results from about six different case studies.....

Mr Glyde wishes to advise the committee that his recall on the number of case studies was incorrect. ABARE is getting the results from four different case studies.

In answering Senator O'Brien question (Hansard page 30; 16 February 2007):

Senator O'Brien—Is it just a coincidence that Queensland received the largest proportion of funding in rounds 1 and 2 while Senator Macdonald was the minister?

Mr R Murphy answered:

Mr R Murphy—No, that is not right. I will give you the numbers. Queensland received 53; New South Wales, 62; Victoria, 41; South Australia, 22; Western Australia, 24; Tasmania, 19; Northern Territory, nine; New South Wales, two. That is through rounds—

Mr R Murphy wishes to advise the committee that the State-by-State figures should have been Queensland received 49; New South Wales, 44; Victoria, 31; South Australia, 18; Western Australia, 17; Tasmania, 13; Northern Territory, six; Australian Capital Territory, two. That is through rounds.
