

**Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

Additional Budget Estimates February 2009

**Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry**

**Question: AFMA 02**

**Division/Agency: Australian Fisheries Management Authority**

**Topic: E-lodgements**

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**Senator [Colbeck] asked:**

**Senator COLBECK**—Okay. Do you have any specific information on those particular e-projects?

**Mr Hurry**—Yes, we do. We have been using it in the process of informing industry and I am quite happy to share that with you.

**Senator COLBECK**—I would appreciate that. Thanks very much. What has your feedback been on the eLodgement service, and what is your anticipated take-up—or is it a mandatory process?

**Mr Hurry**—On the estimations we did, we were looking for about an 80 per cent take-up on the system. But as we get into this and it becomes better tested, we would move it across most fisheries. I suspect we would be looking for a mandatory take-up on this, I would think, as we move forward because the benefits of this are getting as many as you can on an electronic log system so we can pull some of the paper based systems out of the organisation. That is where we are trying to head. But we are also conscious that some of the vessels we have in the fisheries do not have the electronics to allow them to use some of these technologies. So we know we will have to probably keep a small set on more paper based reporting, but the more we can get over the more efficiencies we gain as an organisation.

**Senator COLBECK**—How much have you spent on the system at the moment?

**Mr Hurry**—I would have to take that on notice and get you the figures, but I think on e-log it is probably about \$1.5 million.

**Senator COLBECK**—I would be interested in getting a sense of the costs of your other suite of projects as well. That would be good. What are your anticipated cost savings?

**Mr Hurry**—It depends on the take-up. I am happy to share what figures we have on that with you, but I would have to take the figures on this on notice.

**Senator COLBECK**—Let us say an 80 per cent take-up, which is what you indicated you were aiming for. What sort of efficiencies would that bring you?

**Mr Hurry**—Let me take that one on notice for you and I will get the correct figures for you.

**Answer:**

The total expenditure for e-Logs to date is \$832 779. The e-Log system is an electronic method for reporting catch and effort data. It will allow fishers to elect to send this data to AFMA over the internet or by e-mail, either on return to port or while at sea, in place of paper log sheets. E-Logs will result in cost savings from reduced manual entry data costs. Assuming 80 per cent of data is submitted electronically, an annual cost saving of around \$200 000 is anticipated.

AFMA has redeveloped its licensing database over the past 5 years at a total cost of \$5 428 391. This redevelopment will, in part, allow e-Licensing to be launched on 1 July 2009. E-Licensing is an internet based licensing system that allows AFMA's clients to conduct some of their licensing transactions (for example, transfer fishing concessions to another entity) without the need for AFMA staff to manually process the transaction. It is estimated that approximately \$1 174 000 will be spent on e-Licensing prior to its launch. It is anticipated that 80 per cent of transactions will be conducted through e-Licensing by 2011 — resulting in annual expected cost savings of just over \$166 000. The system is also expected to provide a much higher standard

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**Question:** AFMA02 (continued)

of service, especially as the fishing industry will be able to make “real-time” transactions, without waiting for approval from AFMA.

In addition to e-Logs and e-Licensing AFMA is considering a range of other e-Business systems including e-Monitoring and e-CDRs (catch disposal records).

This response was delayed in order to compile and include the most up to date cost information for the ongoing development of e-Licensing and supporting database.