

**Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

Additional Estimates February 2012

**Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry**

**Question: 10**

**Division/Agency:** Biosecurity – Animal Division

**Topic:** Skill Set of Staff Dealing With Animal Export Reform Issues

**Proof Hansard page:** 29

**Senator BACK asked:**

So these are just specifically administrative roles, Ms Cale, are they? Or do these 12 persons or full-time equivalents have, or are they expected to have, any knowledge of, expertise or skills in the live export trade and the knowledge of the countries to which we export? Or are they flick-and-tick administrative type functionaries?

**Ms Cale:** No. The people who are within my branch have expertise in the live export trade. Quite a number—

**Senator BACK:** But would they have travelled on ships to the Middle East or to Indonesia? Twelve of them would not know—

**Ms Cale:** Yes, some of them have, not all 12.

**Senator BACK:** No.

**Ms Cale:** We do have a combination of technical resources and administrative resources. One of the officers, for example, was a DAFF counsellor posted in Dubai for the last few years. Others have been operating in the animal export operations branch and so have extensive knowledge. And yes, a few—at least one, if not more— have travelled on vessels overseas.

**Senator BACK:** I would appreciate it if you could advise the committee on notice just a summary of the background of those skill sets.

**Ms Cale:** Sure.

**Answer:**

There is a range of relevant skills within the Animal Export Reform Branch, including veterinarians, technical officers with degrees in science, agricultural science and animal science and administrative officers.

Two officers have accompanied livestock on export voyages while seven officers have previously worked in the Animal Export Operations Branch. One veterinary officer also recently served the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Agricultural Counsellor based in Dubai.

**Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee**

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**Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry**

**Question: 11**

**Division/Agency:** Biosecurity – Animal Division

**Topic:** Cost of Preparing a Notice of Intention

**Proof Hansard page:** 29

**Senator BACK asked:**

Can you give us some indication as to what you predict the cost would be to the exporter in the preparation of an NOI and an ESCAS for each consignment?

**Ms Cale:** It is hard to say at this point in time. Again, it will depend on the information coming through and the timeliness of the information et cetera. But as with Indonesia we do charge a per head rate, and then for anything beyond 11 hours of normal processing there is an hourly rate that is applied. I can try and get you some estimates, but until we actually see the NOIs coming through and see the quality of the information et cetera, it will be very hard to estimate.

**Senator BACK:** In doing that I wonder if you would refer back to your answer to my question 14 from supplementary estimates in October, in which you gave us figures to that point?

**Ms Cale:** Yes.

**Answer:**

Livestock exports by sea are charged at a per head rate based on a tier system. The tier-based system is linked to the level of complexity of the importing country requirements. Additional services above the agreed per head base rate are charged a time based fee. Details about the fee structure for livestock exports can be viewed at [www.daff.gov.au/aqis/export/live-animals/fees-charges/exports](http://www.daff.gov.au/aqis/export/live-animals/fees-charges/exports).

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) has not yet completed a full Exporter Supply Chain Assurance System (ESCAS) assessment for a consignment proposed for export to tranche 1 countries (Turkey, Qatar, Kuwait and Bahrain). DAFF expects to encounter exporter, species, market and supply chain specific issues that may vary the time required and costs applicable for ESCAS assessments. At this time, DAFF is unable to accurately estimate the costs of an ESCAS assessment.

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**Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry**

**Question: 12**

**Division/Agency:** Biosecurity – Animal Division

**Topic:** Sheep and Cattle Sent Overseas

**Proof Hansard page:** 29

**Senator BACK asked:**

I now turn to the proposals coming forward on 1 March. That is 16 days away. Is it in consideration in the implementation of tranche 1 that export permits that will be issued from or after 1 March, or is it in consideration of livestock that you anticipate would be delivered to the Middle East markets by 1 March? When does the process start?

**Ms Cale:** As Ms Langford said, once the orders are registered the new requirements come into effect the next day. For example, if they are registered on 29 February they will take effect from 1 March and we will apply the ESCAS arrangements from that point. To avoid problems with animals that are being transported to wharf at that time, we are suggesting that exporters will be required to have an ESCAS in place if they do not have their permission to leave for loading by the 29th.

**Senator BACK:** Given that is 16 days away, and given the transit times that we know from eastern and western Australian ports, that really, effectively, is now, isn't it?

**Dr O'Connell:** Sorry—just to be clear—I think you are also asking if it would take effect for animals that were being delivered after 1 March, or for permits that were being issued from 1—

**Senator BACK:** That is correct. That is exactly the question.

**Dr O'Connell:** If there is a permit already issued and there are animals on the way, that goes under the old system. It is from that date that new permits must meet the ESCAS arrangements.

**Senator BACK:** Thank you. To save time, I wonder if you could provide on notice a breakdown of the percentage of sheep and cattle that are delivered to the countries, based on 2010-2011 figures for the countries represented in all three tranches so that we have some understanding of the percentage numbers?

**Answer:**

The tables below show the number of sheep and cattle exported to tranche one, two and three countries, and the total exported to each country as a percentage of total exports from Australia in 2010 and 2011. Please note that where a country is not listed within a tranche below, it indicates that there were no exports of that species to that country.

**Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

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**Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry**

**Question: 12 (continued)**

**TRANCHE 1**

**Feeder and Slaughter Sheep Exports from Australia**

	<b>2010</b>		<b>2011</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Per cent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Per cent</b>
<b>Total Sheep Exports to all markets</b>	2 948 060	100	2,512,885	100
Kuwait	1 062 321	36	981 974	39.1
Bahrain	501 000	17	396 636	15.8
Qatar	314 025	10.7	398 165	15.8
Turkey	215 038	7.3	351 832	14

**Feeder and Slaughter Cattle Exports from Australia**

	<b>2010 Totals</b>		<b>2011 Totals</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Per cent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Per cent</b>
<b>Total cattle exports to all markets</b>	785 182	100	589 476	100
Kuwait	365	0.05	260	0.04
Bahrain	1751	0.22	2424	0.4
Qatar	941	0.12	408	0.07
Turkey	64 338	8.2	53 429	9.1

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**Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry**

**Question: 12** (continued)

**TRANCHE 2**

**Feeder and Slaughter Sheep Exports from Australia**

	<b>2010</b>		<b>2011</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Per cent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Per cent</b>
<b>Total Sheep Exports to all markets</b>	2 948 060	100	2 512 885	100
United Arab Emirates	104 203	3.53	41 339	1.65
Oman	83 903	2.85	36 025	1.43
Saudi Arabia	264 088	8.96	23 928	0.95
Israel	42 000	1.42	49 600	1.97
Jordan	321 012	10.89	214 328	8.53
Singapore	3642	0.12	2701	0.11
Malaysia	16 678	0.57	16 078	0.64

**Feeder and Slaughter Cattle Exports from Australia**

	<b>2010 Totals</b>		<b>2011 Totals</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Per cent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Per cent</b>
<b>Total cattle exports to all markets</b>	785 182	100	589 476	100
United Arab Emirates	221	0.03	150	0.03
Saudi Arabia	16 485	2.10	3000	0.51
Japan	14 155	1.8	13 498	2.29
Israel	44 083	5.61	53 134	9.01
Jordan	19 257	2.45	391	0.07
Philippines	15 158	1.93	20 491	3.48
Malaysia	10 023	1.28	11 079	1.88

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**Question:** 12 (continued)

**TRANCHE 3**

**Feeder and Slaughter Sheep Exports from Australia**

	<b>2010</b>		<b>2011</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Per cent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Per cent</b>
<b>Total Sheep Exports to all markets</b>	2 948 060	100	2 512 885	100
Mauritius	150	0.005	270	0.01

**Feeder and Slaughter Cattle Exports from Australia**

	<b>2010 Totals</b>		<b>2011 Totals</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Per cent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Per cent</b>
<b>Total cattle exports to all markets</b>	785 182	100	589 476	100
Brunei	2839	0.36	4193	0.71
Mauritius	800	0.1	3006	0.51
Russia	3779	0.48	7000	1.19
Vietnam	0	0	945	0.16

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**Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry**

**Question: 13**

**Division/Agency:** Biosecurity – Animal Division

**Topic:** Animal Slaughter

**Proof Hansard page:** 13

**Senator RHIANNON asked:**

**Senator RHIANNON:** In light of the public demands from some live exporters for an extension to the end of February deadline for Bahrain, Qatar, Turkey and Kuwait to meet the new ESCAS system, did government officials and yourself observe anything that would jeopardise meeting this deadline?

**Senator Ludwig:** What I have asked exporters and importers to do is work through the industry-government working group to have a look at what issues have arisen, what matters that they see and advise me accordingly. I am now advised that that advice is going to come to me tomorrow.

**Dr O'Connell:** We hope tomorrow.

**Senator RHIANNON:** Minister, I just want to return to the issue about the slaughter. When you observed the slaughter of the animals, what method of restraint was used and was there any pre-slaughter stunning used?

**Senator Ludwig:** There was no pre-stunning of the animals involved. As to the rest of the detail, I will take that on notice and see what I can usefully provide.

**Senator RHIANNON:** Could any of the people who were with you on the delegation, because I imagine that must be quite—

**Senator Ludwig:** I am sorry, I missed the beginning.

**Senator RHIANNON:** I was after was the method of restraint. I am after what you saw when you see the animals being slaughtered in terms of method of restraint.

**Senator Ludwig:** Yes, and I have answered that.

**Senator RHIANNON:** I beg your pardon?

**Senator Ludwig:** I have said that I will see what I can usefully provide. I will take that question on notice.

**Senator RHIANNON:** Considering it must be still quite fresh in your mind and in the minds of the people from the department who went there, could you to share the description of that with the committee, please?

**Senator Ludwig:** As I said, I will take that on notice.

**Answer:**

The delegation visited three abattoirs and two feedlots. Two abattoirs were processing at the time. The Minister saw a number of animals at these facilities.

**Senate Rural Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**  
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**Question: 18**

**Division/Agency:** Biosecurity – Animal Division

**Topic:** Independent Animal Welfare Office

**Proof Hansard page:** 40

**Senator RHIANNON asked:**

**Senator RHIANNON:** Minister, could you elaborate on the government's plans to establish the national independent animal welfare office? I was interested in what powers the office will have, when it will be established and in what department the office intended to sit—or will it have its own department?

**Senator Ludwig:** This is from the national conference? We will continue to look at that issue.

**Senator RHIANNON:** Could you elaborate on what 'continue to look at this issue' means?

**Senator Ludwig:** I am not sure we have got the right people here at the table. We have just left that area and gone to a new area—biosecurity.

**Senator RHIANNON:** Could you take that on notice?

**Senator Ludwig:** Yes, I will take it on notice as to what range of matters we already deal with in this issue.

**Answer:**

The Australian Government has made no announcements about any office of animal welfare.



**Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee**

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**Question: 129**

**Division/Agency:** Biosecurity – Animal Division

**Topic:** Live Animal Exports

**Proof Hansard page:** Written

**Senator HEFFERNAN asked:**

1. What was the total take up of financial assistance offered to pastoralist and pastoral service industry during and after the live cattle suspension
2. Was the support offered effective? How do you assess effectiveness?
3. What ongoing assistance is being offered or is required?
4. What aid and assistance is being offered in Indonesia to Australian invested feed lotting and slaughter businesses?
5. What further aid or compensation is being considered by DAFF for the losses incurred by the Northern Australia pastoral industry?
6. How has DAFF quantified the losses to industry participants and service providers caused by the live cattle export suspension?
7. How is DAFF monitoring the impact of the live cattle suspension and the deleterious effect on the Australia Indonesia relationship?
8. Which ministers attended the recent Indonesian food security summit in Jakarta? Please provide details of names of Ministers & departmental staff who also attended , cost of trip, expenses, etc
9. Who from DAFF executive advised the minister correctly and in accordance with policy recommending the suspension of live cattle to Indonesia?
10. What is DAFF's current position on continuing live export trade to Indonesia?
11. How is DAFF assisting with the proposed private development of a abattoir south of Darwin, if what assistance is being offered?
12. What financial and infrastructure assistance and support is DAFF providing for the abattoir development in Northern Aust?
13. Who in DAFF is monitoring the Northern Australia cattle industry?

**Answer:**

1. For detailed information, refer to answer provided to Question on Notice 115 Climate Change Division from the Additional Estimates hearing in February 2012.
2. The objective of the domestic assistance measures was to supplement the working capital needs of pastoralists and service businesses during and following the temporary suspension of the trade. The assistance measures were effective in that they were available broadly and provided quickly to those most impacted by the temporary suspension. The level of demand for these measures is reflective of the take-up rates.

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**Question:** 129 (continued)

3. Rural Financial Counselling Services are available to primary producers and small rural businesses suffering financial difficulties, whether this is from the temporary suspension of the live cattle export trade or other reasons. Support is available to employers of Indigenous Australians and Indigenous businesses through the Indigenous Employment Program, provided by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR). The government also extended priority assistance to Job Services Australia providers for retrenched workers in the live cattle export industry. These providers are managed by DEEWR until 30 June 2012.
4. The Australian Government has made allocations of \$10 million (over four years ending 30 June 2015) from the Official Development Assistance (ODA) contingency reserve to Indonesia and other ODA eligible countries that import livestock from Australia in order to improve animal welfare outcomes. The Australian Government has also allocated \$5 million (over two years ending 30 June 2013) to support Australian exporters to deliver improved supply chains.
5. No further aid or compensation package is planned.
6. At the time the trade was suspended and prior to the re-opening of the trade, the impacts of the suspension were examined by the Australian Bureau of Agricultural Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES) in a survey of northern beef producers, the results of which appear at [www.daff.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/1954396/ABARES-survey-of-beef-cattle-producers-in-northern-live-cattle-export-regions.pdf](http://www.daff.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/1954396/ABARES-survey-of-beef-cattle-producers-in-northern-live-cattle-export-regions.pdf). The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) also funded a study by Hydros Consulting in July which can be found at [www.daff.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0009/1984383/financial-impacts-of-export-restrictions-report.pdf](http://www.daff.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/1984383/financial-impacts-of-export-restrictions-report.pdf). Estimates of impacts are also contained in the regulatory impact statement which incorporates all available information and can be accessed from the following weblink [ris.finance.gov.au/2011/10/21/livestock-exports-regulatory-framework-for-animal-welfare-assurance-%E2%80%93-regulation-impact-statement-and-post-implementation-review-%E2%80%93-department-of-agriculture-fisheries-and-forestry/](http://ris.finance.gov.au/2011/10/21/livestock-exports-regulatory-framework-for-animal-welfare-assurance-%E2%80%93-regulation-impact-statement-and-post-implementation-review-%E2%80%93-department-of-agriculture-fisheries-and-forestry/).
7. DAFF continues to work closely with Indonesian officials from relevant ministries to maintain a sustainable live cattle trade. The relationship with Indonesia remains strong.
8. No Australian Government ministers attended the recent Indonesian Food Security Summit in Jakarta. Officials from the Australian Embassy in Jakarta, including the DAFF Counsellor (Agriculture) attended the summit.
9. A number of senior departmental officers contributed to advice provided to the Minister on issues surrounding the livestock export trade to Indonesia.

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**Question: 129 (continued)**

10. DAFF is committed to maintaining the governments regulatory framework policies and programs relating to the live export trade to Indonesia.
11. DAFF has assisted by providing information to the project proponent on Australian government programs for which the developer may be eligible.
12. DAFF does not administer programs that would fund infrastructure or provide financial incentives to develop a private facility as being proposed. The Department of Infrastructure and Transport would traditionally run these programs on behalf of the government.
13. ABARES monitors Australian agriculture, including the northern Australian cattle industry. The Agricultural Productivity Division is responsible for policy analysis and development in relation to the Australian cattle industry.

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**Question: 131**

**Division/Agency:** Biosecurity – Animal Division

**Topic:** Porcine Gelatine

**Proof Hansard page:** Written

**Senator HEFFERNAN asked:**

Calcium Bolus Extra (CBE), a livestock supplement is imported and produced from Netherlands. AQIS released a permit condition declaration stating that only pig skin gelatine would be accepted.

1. Why was it deemed that pig skin gelatine was acceptable and bone or trotters were not? Who made this decision, when was this decision made? what was the rationale behind it and what information was relied on to make the decision?
2. How many tonnes of uncooked pig meat are imported annually into Australia from overseas countries? Please provide details for past 3 financial years.
3. What is the difference in possible animal/human contamination risk between uncooked pig meat and refined porcine gelatine?
4. If porcine gelatine is commonly used overseas and is accepted under international food standards why did AQIS decide that it was unacceptable in Australia?

**Answer:**

1. Australia's import requirements for gelatine manufactured from pigs allow imports derived from skin, bone or trotters, provided the product meets certain sourcing and processing conditions to manage any biosecurity risks to an acceptable level. In the case of the import permit for Calcium Bolus Extra (CBE), the original application from the importer requested the import of gelatine derived from porcine skins only. The importer provided clarification that the gelatine may also be derived from tissues other than porcine skins. The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry is in the process of reassessing the permit application.
2. The following table provides quantities of uncooked pig meat imported into Australia in each of the past three financial years.

	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Total uncooked pig meat imports (tonnes)	124 800	140 780	128 222

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics: *International Trade*, Australia cat. no. 5465, Canberra.

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**Question: 131 (continued)**

3. The difference in risk between uncooked pig meat and refined porcine gelatine is associated with the end use of the products and the level of processing. In relation to the risk of the end use, products such as uncooked pig meat imported for human consumption pose a lower risk than products such as gelatine that may be used in stockfeed that has a direct pathway to animals. In relation to the risks associated with the level of processing, refined porcine gelatine is a highly heat processed product that undergoes acid and/or alkaline treatments that reduce the risk of viable pathogens of concern being present compared with uncooked pig meat.
  
4. Australia's import requirements for porcine gelatine are consistent with international standards and allow porcine gelatine to be imported. Porcine gelatine for human consumption can be imported without an import permit. An import permit is required for porcine gelatine for use in veterinary therapeutics, vaccines or animal feed products because of the direct exposure pathway to livestock species. This is in accordance with Quarantine Proclamation 1998.

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**Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry**

**Question:** 199

**Division/Agency:** Biosecurity – Animal Division  
**Topic:** Animal Welfare and Industry Competitiveness  
**Proof Hansard page:** Written

**Senator RHIANNON asked:**

In MLA's submission to the Farmer Review it was revealed that in the Philippines – pithing – whereby animals have a rod stabbed into their brain (through the skull or eye socket) whilst fully conscious prior to slaughter – is common.

1. In recognition of the fact that pithing is not only contrary to World Organisation for animal health (OIE) guidelines but is extremely cruel, what action have government officials taken to ensure no Australian animals in the Philippines are subjected to this practice?
2. Have export permits been granted for the Philippines since this came to light last August?
3. Does DAFF intend to grant export permits to the Philippines in the future?
4. Given government officials have provided evidence during estimate hearings consistently stating that importing countries must meet OIE guidelines – why have exports to the Philippines continued in full knowledge that the killing practices are completely contrary to OIE?

**Answer:**

1. The pithing of livestock at slaughter is illegal in the Philippines, including the severing of the spinal cord as described in Meat and Livestock Australia's submission. Animal welfare standards and slaughter practices in the Philippines are governed by an overarching Animal Welfare Act and the more specific Administrative Order, Number 18 (2008) on the Humane Handling in the Slaughter of Animals for Food. The Administrative Order requires that all animals presented for slaughter are effectively stunned.

From 1 September 2012, the exporter supply chain assurance system (ESCAS) regulatory framework will be extended to include the Philippines. To gain approval to export to the Philippines under the ESCAS framework, exporters will need to demonstrate to the Australian Government, using verification via independent audit reports, that animal welfare outcomes can be met through to the point of slaughter. The exporter's ESCAS will need to deliver internationally agreed welfare requirements (OIE); control over the movement of animals through the supply chain to point of slaughter; tracking/accountability of animals throughout the supply chain and independent auditing and reporting to government.

2. Yes.

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**Question:** 199 (continued)

3. Prior to 1 September 2012, any requests for export permits for livestock consignments destined to the Philippines will be assessed in accordance with the existing regulatory framework under the *Export Control (Animals) Order 2004*.

The Philippines is included in tranche 2 of the new regulatory framework. This will come into effect from 1 September 2012 and will require an approved exporter supply chain assurance system (ESCAS) to be provided as part of the request to export.

4. Please refer to question 1.

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**Question: 200**

**Division/Agency:** Biosecurity – Animal Division

**Topic:** Location of Indonesian Abattoirs

**Proof Hansard page:** Written

**Senator RHIANNON asked:**

I understand 31 facilities have been approved under the new Exporter Supply Chain Assurance System (ESCAS) to process Australian cattle in Indonesia.

1. Can you provide me with the names and locations of each facility? If not, why not, given all industry representative bodies and departmental officers have access to this information?
2. Can you confirm whether any of the facilities visited by Four Corners, Animals Australia or the industry/veterinary delegation that visited Indonesia in May 2010 are currently approved to process Australian cattle? If so, please list them.

**Answer:**

1. As of 2 March 2012, there are 83 separate facilities (feedlots as well as abattoirs) included in approved exporter supply chains. The names and locations of each facility are commercial in confidence and cannot be provided to third parties without the agreement of the exporter concerned.
2. See response to Question 1.



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**Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry**

**Question: 202**

**Division/Agency:** Biosecurity – Animal Division

**Topic:** New Supply Chain

**Proof Hansard page:** Written

**Senator RHIANNON asked:**

1. Will the new ESCAS ensure the individual identification of sheep?
2. Given the tracking of individual animals throughout the entire supply chain is the key element of the new ESCAS, hasn't the system then failed before it's even begun?
3. How can the welfare of individual animals be assured throughout the supply chain if there is no system in place to allow individual sheep to be tracked?
4. In his review of the live export trade – Bill Farmer noted that the industry advised that sheep counts in particular are often inaccurate and contribute to errors in calculating mortality rates. How then can this supposed system of reconciliation be relied upon to provide accurate traceability of sheep throughout the supply chain?

**Answer:**

1. The Government has accepted all 14 recommendations of the Independent review of the live export trade (the Review) headed by Mr Bill Farmer AO. The Review found that the ability to trace an individual animal throughout the supply chain was beneficial. In responding to recommendation 8 of the Review, the Government committed to develop and implement a unique animal identification system for sheep and goats. This will be actioned through the Council of Australian Governments. Until a time when a unique animal identification system for sheep is adopted by the States and Territories, it is up to the exporter to prove to the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) that the exporter can account for movements of animals through their supply chain. Australian origin sheep will be tracked by a system of accounting and reconciliation. Prior to approval of a supply chain, DAFF will require independent auditor confirmation of the effectiveness of the sheep accountability system proposed for use by an exporter in its exporter supply chain assurance system (ESCAS). The exporter may elect to use individual Radio Frequency Identification tags as part of this system if they choose.
2. See answer to question one.
3. DAFF will approve an ESCAS submission if the exporter provides appropriate evidence of control of the supply chain, the presence of an effective accountability system and animal welfare processes in accordance with internationally agreed animal welfare standards. The assurance is provided by independent auditor confirmation that the accounting system is effective prior to approval to export, and assessment of whether all sheep are accounted for within the approved supply chain once animals have entered.
4. See answers to question one and three.

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**Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry**

**Question: 203**

**Division/Agency:** Biosecurity – Animal Division

**Topic: Lack Of Public Information About New Supply Chain System**

**Proof Hansard page:** Written

**Senator RHIANNON asked:**

1. Given the government has stated that public accountability and transparency is integral to the new regulatory framework, how can the lack of detail made public in the Exporter Supply Chain Assurance System (ESCAS) audit reports on the DAFF website be justified?
2. Why is there such little information on the government's website?
3. Do you have plans to add further information to the website? If so what will be added?
4. How often will the website be updated?
5. How can parliamentarians, animal welfare groups and the public have any assurance that exporters are meeting their obligations under the new system if little more than the date of the audit and the company doing the auditing is made available publicly?
6. What happens if Exporter Supply Chain Assurance System (ESCAS) is breached?
7. Under the new export control orders, what ramifications are there for exporters who breach the new ESCAS?

**Answer:**

1. Accountability and transparency are a key part of the new regulatory framework and in determining the extent of public disclosure of the information contained in the independent audit reports, the Australian Government also had to consider foreign government sensitivities and concerns for personal and commercial privacy. Information provided in the published summaries and supplementary information accurately reflects the findings of the full independent audit reports, including identified non-compliances and subsequent rectifications. The extent of the disclosure provides the Australian community with assurance about the treatment of exported Australian livestock while maintaining individual and commercial privacy.
2. The new reforms provide more clarity and transparency around the live export trade than ever before.

For more information, please refer to the answer to Question 1.

3. Yes. Information outlining the outcomes of the independent performance audits of exporter supply chains will also be published on the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) website. The performance audits provide an assessment of the exporter supply chain assurance system when animals are in the system. These documents will be published following appropriate review and investigation if necessary.
4. The DAFF website will be updated at regular intervals on an ongoing basis.

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5. Please refer to the answer to Questions 1 and 2.
6. Legislative sanctions that fit within the framework of the *Australian Meat and Live-stock Industry Act 1997* ([www.comlaw.gov.au/Series/C2004A05295](http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Series/C2004A05295)) are already available to the DAFF. Further to this DAFF, has developed a document that provides guidance on the management of non-compliance in an exporter supply chain assurance system for Indonesia. This information is publicly available on the DAFF website at [www.daff.gov.au/aqis/export/live-animals/livestock/escas/non-compliance](http://www.daff.gov.au/aqis/export/live-animals/livestock/escas/non-compliance). This framework will be extended to all markets and will be updated accordingly on the website as appropriate.
7. Please refer to the answer to Question 6.

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**Question:** 204

**Division/Agency:** Biosecurity – Animal Division  
**Topic:** Animal Welfare and Industry Competitiveness  
**Proof Hansard page:** Written

**Senator RHIANNON asked:**

1. In relation to the Farmer review recommendations, when is the overdue and delayed review by LESAG (Live Export Standards Advisory Group) of ASEL (Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock) intended to begin?
2. The Farmer Review recommended that the current inspection regime at the port of Fremantle be reviewed to ensure thorough individual animals being inspected portside for fitness. When will this review begin and how long is it intended to take?
3. In light of evidence to the Farmer Review of on board veterinarians being pressured by exporters, the Review recommended daily reports be submitted simultaneously to the exporter and AQIS. Is this occurring?
4. Given simultaneous reporting was already supposed to be in place prior to the Farmer Review – when will this begin?

**Answer:**

1. The comprehensive review of Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock (ASEL) and Live Export Standards Advisory Group (LESAG) has commenced. The review of LESAG and ASEL is scheduled to be completed by the end of February 2013.
2. Scoping of the review of the inspection regime at the port of Fremantle will begin in March 2012 with the review to be finalised by mid 2013.
3. Arrangements are currently being finalised with exporters for daily reports to be submitted simultaneously by the Australian Quarantine Inspection Service Accredited Veterinarian (AAV) to the exporter and Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, as recommended by the Farmer review.
4. Simultaneous reporting is expected to commence in the near future. Under current practice, the department receives the AAV's report from the exporter.

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**Question: 205**

**Division/Agency:** Biosecurity – Animal Division

**Topic: First Hand Experience of Abattoirs**

**Proof Hansard page:** Written

**Senator RHIANNON asked:**

Has any departmental officer or government official been inside any Indonesian abattoirs?  
Please provide details of the date, nature of visits and who was involved.

**Answer:**

Yes. Since the airing of the *Four Corners* program on 30 May 2011, a veterinary officer, as part of the secretariat of the Independent Review into Livestock Exports (the Farmer Review), from the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry accompanied one of the independent subject matter experts to an Indonesian abattoir on 5 August 2011.

Separately, a veterinary officer from the Live Export Taskforce visited two abattoirs on 12 December and on 15 December 2011, respectively. The visits were undertaken to better understand slaughter operations in Indonesian abattoirs.

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**Question: 211**

**Division/Agency:** Biosecurity – Animal Division  
**Topic: Animal Welfare and Industry Competitiveness**  
**Proof Hansard page:** Written

**Senator RHIANNON asked:**

A program deliverable of DAFF is regulations that meet the needs of the industry to maintain industry competitiveness. A Key Performance Indicator of this deliverable is 'timely contribution to the development of Australian animal welfare standards and guidelines for production and non-production animals.

1. Are there any plans for enforceable regulations (legislation, codes of practice) to be put in place?
2. Are there any plans for enforceable regulations that meet the needs of the animals and community expectations?

DAFF's overall 'departmental objective in 2011-12 and beyond' is, inter alia, to 'improve the productivity...of Australia's agricultural industries...'. Another program objective of DAFF is to 'assist primary producers to develop a more competitive, internationally focused and self-reliant meat and livestock industry'.

3. What will be the impact of the imperative to productivity and competitiveness on animal welfare, given the program objective identified in DAFF's Budget to 'improve animal welfare outcomes'?
4. Is it envisaged that there will be further intensification of the meat and livestock industry to achieve increased productivity and competitiveness?
5. Will assistance be provided to develop more free range / organic systems?

**Answer:**

1. The model codes of practice for the welfare of animals are being replaced progressively by a new series of nationally agreed standards and guidelines, which will be legislated by state and territory governments. All states and territories are now working to implement the first of these, the *Australian animal welfare standards and guidelines—land transport of livestock*.
2. The new animal welfare standards are enforceable in state and territory government legislation and are aimed at improving the welfare of animals in all jurisdictions.
3. The Australian Government's approach to animal welfare requires that animals under human care are healthy, properly fed and comfortable, and that efforts are made to improve their wellbeing and living conditions. The government supports the view that improvements in animal welfare outcomes will have positive impacts on productivity and competitiveness.

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4. Analysis by Australian Bureau of Agricultural Resource Economics and Sciences has identified that enterprise size and capital investment are drivers of productivity growth in the livestock industries. However, the Australian Government has no role in determining the type of production systems that the meat and livestock industry should adopt. These are individual business decisions.
  
5. The Australian Government, through Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, provides assistance to enhance the sustainability, profitability and competitiveness of Australia's agriculture sector. The government does not favour one production system over another and so all production systems, including free range/organic systems, benefit from existing government programs.

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**Question:** 213

**Division/Agency:** Biosecurity – Animal Division

**Topic:** DAFF Animal Welfare Funding

**Proof Hansard page:** Written

**Senator RHIANNON asked:**

1. In relation to the Animal Welfare branch within DAFF – what funding is provided for its operations annually?
2. What funding is earmarked for its operations over the next financial year?

**Answer:**

1. Funding allocated to the Animal Welfare Branch in 2011-12 is \$2.485 million.
2. Funding is estimated to be \$2.428 million for 2012-13.



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**Question:** 214

**Division/Agency:** Biosecurity – Animal Division

**Topic:** Outstanding Question on AAWAC

**Proof Hansard page:** Written

**Senator RHIANNON asked:**

About the newly formed AAWAC and the skill set of the committee –  
Did you set out the skills you were looking for when you determined the people you were selecting? Can you provide that to the committee please?

The response given by Mr Murnane was “Yes, Senator. I will have to provide that to you on notice”. Has this information been provided yet?

**Answer:**

Yes. The information was provided in QoN 60 Agricultural Productivity Division from the Supplementary Estimates in October 2011.

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**Question: 215**

**Division/Agency:** Biosecurity – Animal Division

**Topic:** Allowing Sheep to Deal with Heat Stress

**Proof Hansard page:** Written

**Senator RHIANNON asked:**

1. When is the heat stress software model in relation to stocking density on ship going to be reviewed and put into place, given AQIS high mortality report recommendations have been indicating this has been desperately needed for several years.

Senator Rhiannon asked the following in respect of DAFF funding through the Live Trade Animal Welfare Partnership program –

I understand that the DAFF budget statements provide that 100 per cent of funds have been allocated to deliver capacity building and technical assistance projects to improve animal welfare in the Middle East and south-east Asian countries through the Live Trade Animal Welfare Partnership Program. Could you provide details on how these funds have been allocated between those countries?

The response given by Ms Evans was “All of the information about the projects that I have been allocated is publicly available on the web. I am happy to provide that for you in hard copy this afternoon?”

2. Can you provide the links to that information?  
DAFF's Budget includes as 'Key Performance Indicators': 'Meet with meat and livestock industry representatives to discuss policy issues.'
3. Given that ‘improved animal welfare outcomes’ are identified as an associated program objective, and highlighted in the DAFF Annual Report 2010-11 as a key priority, will DAFF also consult with representatives from animal welfare bodies, such as Voiceless, to discuss policy issues, so as to ensure that its priority to improve animal welfare can be achieved?
4. Will DAFF appropriately advise the Minister of the overwhelming scientific evidence that intensive farming has a serious negative impact on animal welfare, as well as on environmental sustainability?
5. Will DAFF advise the Minister of the progress being made in many comparable international legislatures and jurisdictions including the EU, the UK, New Zealand and some US states to phase out intensive methods of animal production such as sow stalls and battery cages?
6. Will DAFF advise the Minister that the decision by APL to phase out sow stalls by 2017 should appropriately be embodied in the Model Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals - Pigs Third Edition, both to support the industry and help ensure compliance?

**Answer:**

1. The final report on version four of the heat stress software model was formally approved by Meat and Livestock Australia’s Live Export Research and Development Advisory Committee on 15 February 2012. Since 21 July 2011 exporters have been required to

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submit the draft version four of the model or both the draft version four and version two point three of the model, as part of their Notice of Intention to export.

2. [www.daff.gov.au/market-access-trade/iac/live-animal-trade](http://www.daff.gov.au/market-access-trade/iac/live-animal-trade).
3. The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) directly engages with animal welfare advocacy groups on activities such as development of national standards and activities to deliver the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy (AAWS). Representatives of the animal advocacy sector are directly engaged in AAWS working groups. For example, Animals Australia and Royal Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) are represented on the Australian Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (AAWAC) and expert working groups. Voiceless and Animal Liberation were also members of the animals in work, sport, recreation and display working group in phase 1 of the AAWS program from 2005 to 2010. In addition, Compassion in World Farming and Animal Welfare League were also directly involved. Other animal advocacy groups are regularly engaged on particular issues, for example, Animals Angels on livestock transport issues.
4. DAFF does not accept that there is overwhelming scientific evidence that intensive farming has a serious negative impact on animal welfare and environmental sustainability.
5. DAFF provides advice to the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Senator the Hon Joe Ludwig on a broad range of national and international animal welfare issues. This includes advice on trends in livestock production systems both in Australia and overseas.
6. The decision by Australia's pig industry to phase out the use of sow stalls by 2017 will be taken into account during the next review of the Model Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals – Pigs. That review will also deal with the conversion of the model code to standards and guidelines to be regulated by the states and territories.