

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2006

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: WEA 01

Division/Agency: Wheat Export Authority

Topic: Mr Taylor's AWA

Hansard Page: 43 (24/05/06)

Senator Heffernan asked (sic):

Could we see the paperwork that developed the logic for Mr Taylor's performance bonus? (and) Would it be in order for us to see the review of staff in the Authority?

Answer:

For privacy reasons, the Wheat Export Authority is unable to release information related to an individual's Australian Workplace Agreement and associated performance payments.

Question: WEA 02

Division/Agency: Wheat Export Authority

Topic: Mr Taylor's AWA

Hansard Page: 50 (24/05/06)

Senator O'Brien asked:

I would like you to advise us which SES level, and which position in the Public Service, Mr Taylor's position has been aligned to.

Answer:

Mr Taylor's total remuneration package¹ was set at a value which aligned with an SES Band 2. This value is based on the *2003 APS SES Remuneration Survey* conducted by Mercer Human Resource Consulting and published by the Department of Employment & Workplace Relations (DEWR).

Mr Taylor's current total remuneration package continues to align with the SES Band 2 for 2005 and 2006.

In addition, Mr Taylor's remuneration package fits within the 'Principal Executive Office Classification Structure at the PEO Band B level' in accordance with Remuneration Tribunal Determination 2005/19 for Chief Executive Officers of Statutory Authorities effective from 1 July 2005.

¹ *Total Remuneration Package includes Base Salary, superannuation, motor vehicles and other fixed benefits paid to SES employees including applicable FBT*

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2006

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: WEA 03

Division/Agency: Wheat Export Authority

Topic: Mr Taylor's AWA

Hansard Page: 50 (24/05/06)

Senator Ferris asked:

Presumably your position is held against a position within the structure of the department which has a skills set attached to it that is able to be compared. For completeness, when we get this documentation it would be useful to have the complete analysis.

Answer:

In September 1999 the Wheat Export Authority, established in July 1999 under the Wheat Marketing Act 1989, sought applications from suitably qualified individuals for the position of Chief Executive Officer who would report to Members of the Board through a non-executive Chairman.

Recruitment for this position was managed by 'Agricultural Appointments'.

The role was advertised as a new role within the Authority with a pivotal role to play in the export of Australian wheat, and requiring a senior executive who could manage wide ranging relationships with dedication and poise operating within and across both the public and private sectors.

The skills set sought was based on the standard Australian Public Service Senior Executive Service criteria, and included the following:

- Strong leadership qualities, strategic awareness and vision coupled with judgement and initiative;
- A first class track record in policy development;
- Sound administrative skills;
- Excellent written and oral communication skills;
- Highly developed analytical and conceptual skills;
- Familiarity with the operations and working relationships of the public sector and Government accountability processes;
- Experience in or knowledge of the grains industry and grain trading; and
- Demonstrable ability to develop and direct research and policy analysis.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2006

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: WEA 04

Division/Agency: Wheat Export Authority

Topic: Cole Commission Inquiry

Hansard Page: 51-52 (24/05/06)

Senator O'Brien asked:

Can you confirm, Mr Taylor, that you, as the most senior officer overseeing the use by AWB(I) of the single desk, had no idea of how the contracts with the Iraqi grains board were constructed?

Answer:

The negotiation of contracts between AWB (International) Ltd and its customers are commercial arrangements and as such are not matters in respect of which the Wheat Export Authority has any role.

Question: WEA 05

Division/Agency: Wheat Export Authority

Topic: Wheat Industry Benchmarking report

Hansard Page: 61 (24/05/06)

Senator Ferris asked:

Is it possible for this committee to be supplied with a report done on wheat industry benchmarking?

Answer:

The report has been provided by AWB (International) Ltd to the Wheat Export Authority (WEA) on a commercial in confidence basis for Performance Monitoring and Reporting purposes. Under the confidentiality agreement between the WEA and AWB (International) Ltd the WEA is unable to release the report.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2006

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: WEA 06

Division/Agency: Food and Agriculture

Topic: 2004 WEA PMR

Hansard Page: 63 (24/05/06)

Senator O'Brien asked:

Senator O'BRIEN—Was there any response or follow-up from the department to the contents of the October 2004 report?

Mr Phillips—It predates my time. I would have to check. I cannot answer that question right now because I was not around at that time, but I can find out whether we provided advice.

Senator O'BRIEN—Do you know, Mr Banfield?

Mr Banfield—No, I do not. Again, we will take that on notice and come back to you, Senator.

Answer:

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry provided briefing to the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry on the Wheat Export Authority's October 2004 Performance Monitoring Report in November 2004.

Question: WEA 07

Division/Agency: Wheat Export Authority

Topic: Update to brief note on Iraq

Hansard Page: 64 (24/05/06)

Senator Siewert asked:

Can an update to the brief note on Iraq previously provided in April 2003 be provided to the committee?

Answer:

The Wheat Export Authority is advised that a non-publication order has been made by the Commissioner in relation to material tendered to the Cole Inquiry on a confidential basis. The updated brief that is requested is covered by the non-publication order.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2006

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: WEA 08

Division/Agency: Wheat Export Authority

Topic: Update to brief note on Iraq

Hansard Page: 64 (24/05/06)

Senator Siewert asked:

Was this briefing note on Iraq the other evidence that you used to decide to take no further action?

Answer:

Yes.

Question: WEA 09

Division/Agency: Wheat Export Authority

Topic: Ms Duck's resignation

Hansard Page: 64-65 (24/05/06)

Senator O'Brien asked:

When did Ms Duck leave the Wheat Export Authority?

Answer:

28 October 2005.

Question: WEA 10

Division/Agency: Wheat Export Authority

Topic: Access to contracts-awareness of Board

Hansard Page: 65 (24/05/06)

Senator O'Brien asked:

Was the Board aware of the normal practice—that is, that you could take copies of contracts for other matters in the past?

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2006

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Answer:

Yes, the board was aware that the Wheat Export Authority had received copies of contracts or parts of contracts for previous Performance Monitoring and Reporting assessments.

Question: WEA 11

Division/Agency: Wheat Export Authority

Topic: Request for evidence from AWB(I)

Hansard Page: 76 (24/05/06)

Senator O'Brien asked:

How long after 19 March that did you request the other information from AWB(I)?

Answer:

Following analysis by the Wheat Export Authority of the information received from AWB(I) further information was requested on 1 June 2004.