

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2010

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: CPD 01

Division/Agency: Corporate Policy Division

Topic: Questions on Notice from February Additional Estimates Hearing

Hansard Page: 11 (24/05/2010)

Senator Macdonald asked:

Senator IAN MACDONALD—Dr O’Connell, as of this morning we still have not got answers to questions we asked at last estimates. It makes it very difficult for us to follow things along when three months later we do not have the material. Should I be blaming you or are they stuck on the minister’s desk, waiting for a political check?

Dr O’Connell—I will have to have a look and see what the status of those questions is.

Senator IAN MACDONALD—No, you do not need to look. I will give them to you: Biosecurity Services Group, question 17; and Meat and Livestock Australia questions 02, 03 and 08 to 12. The ones I am more interested in are: Sustainable Resource Management questions 03, 04, 06, 14 and 15; and Agricultural Productivity Division questions 03 and 10. As I say, the ones that I am most interested in are the Sustainable Resource Management questions. Is there some reason why there are no answers to those?

Dr O’Connell—I will have to take that up with the minister’s office.

Senator IAN MACDONALD—You are getting to the nub of my question. Have you provided the answers for the minister?

Dr O’Connell—Obviously the minister is responsible for the answers. We do not provide answers to the minister.

Senator IAN MACDONALD—Of course, I know that.

Dr O’Connell—We provide drafts for the minister’s consideration and it would be quite wrong of me to presuppose how the minister handles that.

Senator IAN MACDONALD—I appreciate that.

CHAIR—Have you provided the drafts to the minister?

Dr O’Connell—I would have to have a check on timing, but typically—

Senator NASH—You would know, Dr O’Connell, if you have provided the drafts or not.

Dr O’Connell—If I could complete my answer, it might help. Typically these may involve some iterations to ensure that they are accurate, and I would have to just check whether that is the case.

Senator IAN MACDONALD—I would back your accuracy against the minister’s any day, I might say, but let me put it another way, then. Have you provided to the minister all advices that he might need to adequately answer questions that this committee put to the minister last time, as you rightly point out?

Dr O’Connell—That would be a question, in a sense, to put to the minister as to what would be necessary for him to be confident about an answer, and that is probably exactly where you get iterations on getting a response. That is very typical, as you would be aware, of questions on that.

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Question: CPD 01 (continued)

Senator IAN MACDONALD—Do you advise the minister of parliament's direction to him, and through him to you, that questions have to be answered by a certain day? It is well before today, but we still do not have those answers.

Dr O'Connell—I think the minister is well aware of the Senate's requirements.

Senator IAN MACDONALD—Would you be able, during the next two days—and perhaps Senator Sherry could help here—to get a message to the minister's office to find out why he has not answered those questions in accordance with the resolution of the Senate?

Senator Sherry—I can indicate I have just posed that question and I hope to be able to provide a response to you in the next two days.

Senator IAN MACDONALD—Excellent. Thank you.

Answer:

The draft responses to the 15 outstanding questions on notice from the Additional Estimates hearing on 8 February 2010 were still being finalised at the time of the Senator's question.

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Question: CPD 02

Division/Agency: Corporate Policy Division

Topic: Questions on Notice from February Additional Estimates Hearing

Hansard Page: 12 (24/05/2010)

Senator Colbeck asked:

Senator COLBECK—That is fine. Dr O’Connell, are there any questions for which there is outstanding information for you to provide to the minister where he has questioned some of the information that you have sent to him?

Dr O’Connell—I hate to say it, but I would probably have to take that on notice or try to get back to you on that. I do not have the information in front of me.

Answer:

Please refer to the response to CPD 01.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: CPD 03

Division/Agency: Corporate Policy Division

Topic: Biosecurity advertising

Hansard Page: 24-25 (24/05/2010)

Senator Colbeck asked:

Senator COLBECK—How much of the \$205,000 has been spent on advertising for biosecurity?

Ms McDonald—I will have to take that on notice. I do not have the split.

Senator COLBECK—Can you break down the \$205,000 between tenders and advertising?

Ms McDonald—No. All I have is non-campaign advertising and recruitment advertising and the total for that.

Senator COLBECK—You only have those three figures, the non-campaign being \$205,000, the recruitment being \$268,000 and the total being \$473,000?

Ms McDonald—Yes.

Senator COLBECK—Going back to the marketing and education budget, what is the split in that budget? You have said some of it is staffing. What is the split in staffing and expenditure for marketing and education?

Ms McDonald—I will have to take that one on notice. I have not got that split with me here today.

Senator COLBECK—You are spending \$1.65 million. How much of that is staff?

Ms McDonald—That is in the budget. The team at the moment is 11. There are 11 people. Some of those are in the Canberra office, and there are officers spread around the regions as well.

Senator COLBECK—Is any of that money spent on consultancy?

Ms McDonald—I will have to take that on notice. I am not sure. I do not have that information with me right now.

Answer:

1. Of the \$205 000 spent on advertising from 1 July 2009 to 30 April 2010, approximately \$8000 was spent on non campaign advertising for biosecurity.
2. Of the \$205 000 spent on advertising from 1 July 2009 to 30 April 2010, approximately \$4000 was spent on tenders.
3. Of the 2009-10 biosecurity communications team budget of \$1.65 million:
 - Approximately \$1.17 million was included for employee expenses.
 - Approximately \$0.35 million was included for marketing and education activities.
4. As at 30 April 2010, approximately \$50 000, of the total biosecurity communications team budget of \$1.65 million, has been spent on consultancies.

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Question: CPD 04

Division/Agency: Corporate Policy Division

Topic: Communications programs

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Barnett asked:

1. What communications programs has the Department/Agency undertaken since additional estimates and what communications programs are planned to be undertaken?
2. For each program, what is the total spend?
(by 'communications program' it is meant communication of a government message to the public – possibly by advertising (print, television etc), possibly through the erection of signs, plaques etc, or through other mediums. The recent (current) Government TV advertising campaign on health reform and specific health initiatives are examples, BER signage is an example, advertising on the Government's proposed new tax system would be another example.)
3. A breakdown of how much was spent/is planned to be spent on each program/initiative should be provided.

Answer:

The following table provides information on major communications programs that the department has undertaken since additional estimates.

Communications program	Approximate communications expenditure from 31 January 2010 to 30 May 2010	Approximate breakdown of communications expenditure	
Australia's Farming Future	\$68 700	sponsorship and events:	\$68 700
Biosecurity and quarantine awareness	\$115 700	events:	\$6000
		publications and distribution:	\$86 600
		banners:	\$23 100
Western Australia Drought Pilot	\$24 700	mail out:	\$24 700

The following table provides information on major communications programs that the department is planning to undertake in the future. A detailed breakdown of the budget is not available at the moment. However, examples of proposed activities include workshops, events, publications and mail outs.

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Question: CPD 04 (continued)

Communications Program	Approximate budget to 30 June 2011
Australia's Farming Future	\$1.260 million
Western Australia Drought Pilot	\$0.580 million
Australian Agriculture international DVD	\$0.060 million
Biosecurity and quarantine awareness	\$0.300 million

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Question: CPD 05

Division/Agency: Corporate Policy Division

Topic: Appointments

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Barnett asked:

1. What is the gender ratio on each board and across the portfolio?
2. What is the gender ratio of appointments made to boards since the Government came to office in November 2007?

Answer:

1. As at 18 June 2010:

Portfolio Board Name	Current Gender Balance
Cotton Research and Development Corporation	5 Women 4 Men
Fisheries Research and Development Corporation	2 Women 7 Men
Grape and Wine Research and Development Corporation	3 Women 6 Men
Grains Research and Development Corporation	2 Women 6 Men
Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation	4 Women 5 Men
Sugar Research and Development Corporation	3 Women 6 Men
Australian Fisheries Management Authority Commission	3 Women 6 Men
Australian Wine and Brandy Corporation	3 Women 5 Men
Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority Advisory Board	1 Woman 6 Men
Wheat Exports Australia	2 Women 4 Men

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Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: CPD 05 (continued)

Portfolio Board Name	Current Gender Balance
National Rural Advisory Council	3 Women 4 Men
Statutory Fishing Rights Allocation Review Panel	4 Women 3 Men
Recreational Fishing Advisory Committee	2 Women 7 Men
Australian Landcare Council	7 Women 7 Men
Biosecurity Advisory Council	6 Women 3 Men
Rural Research and Development Council	6 Women 4 Men
Horticulture Code of Conduct Committee	4 Women 4 Men
Regional Food Producers Innovation and Productivity Program Advisory Panel	3 Women 3 Men
Forest Industries Development Fund Advisory Committee	5 Men
Forest Industries Climate Change Research Fund: Assessment Panel	1 Woman 3 Men

The above figures may include executive directors of research and development corporations who are board members, but are not appointed by the minister. Also included are ex-officio members, regardless of whether they are a government or industry representative.

Appointments to statutory selection committees have not been included. Registrar appointments are also not included in the above figures.

2. As at 18 June 2010:

Since November 2007, 67 women and 93 men have been appointed to boards.

Note: This does not include appointments to selection committees and does not include each appointment of the same person to the same board. This does include new appointments due to resignation. Some appointments were to boards now no longer in operation.

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Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: CPD 06

Division/Agency: Corporate Policy

Topic: Community Cabinet travel costs

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Barnett asked:

1. What was the cost of Ministers travel and expenses for the Community Cabinet meetings held since additional estimates?
2. How many Ministerial Staff and Departmental officers travelled with the Minister for the Community Cabinet meeting?
3. What was the total cost of this travel?
4. What was the total cost to the Department and the Ministers office?

Answer:

1. Community Cabinet travel costs for the minister and ministerial staff are met by the Department of Finance and Deregulation, with the exception of car costs for the minister, which are met by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

The minister attended four Community Cabinet meetings held since additional estimates. The 18 February and 19 May 2010 Community Cabinet meetings were combined with visits to industry sites. The minister's costs of visiting these sites cannot be disaggregated from the cost of attending Community Cabinet meetings. Therefore, the department is unable to provide the costs of attending these Community Cabinet meetings.

The cost of the minister's attendance at the 15 April Community Cabinet meetings, which were not combined with visits to industry sites, was \$88.06^{1,2}. The Department of Finance and Deregulation is currently unable to provide costs for the 9 June 2010 Community Cabinet meeting.

2. The number of ministerial staff and departmental officers travelling with the minister for the Community Cabinet meetings are as follows:

Date	Ministerial Staff	Departmental Staff
18 February 2010	2	1
15 April 2010	1	Nil
19 May 2010	3	2
9 June 2010	2	1

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Question: CPD 06 (continued)

3. Of the four Community Cabinet meetings attended by the minister, the 18 February and 19 May 2010 Community Cabinet meetings were combined with visits to industry sites. The total costs of ministerial staff and departmental staff travel for these Community Cabinet meetings cannot be disaggregated from the costs of visiting industry sites and therefore the department is unable to provide costs of attending these Community Cabinet meetings only.

The cost of ministerial staff attendance at the 15 April 2010 Community Cabinet meetings, which were not combined with industry sites, was \$765.94^{1,2}. The Department of Finance and Deregulation is currently unable to provide costs for the 9 June 2010 Community Cabinet meeting.

The cost of the departmental officer attending the 9 June 2010 Community Cabinet meeting was \$2866.25^{1,2,3}.

4. See answers to questions 1, 2 and 3 above.

¹ Without consultation with the travellers, the information provided by Department of Finance and Deregulation relies on an assumption that all travel to and from relevant locations immediately before and after the relevant Cabinet meetings was for the purposes of attending the Cabinet meetings.

² The figures include airfares, car hire and travelling allowance (including motor vehicle allowance) claims. They do not include travel by taxis (due to the difficulties determining exact destinations using the electronic information as provided by Cabcharge) or travel on special purpose aircraft (which is administered by the Department of Defence).

³ This figure does not include Comcar/hire car costs as the department is awaiting invoices.

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Question: CPD 07

Division/Agency: Corporate Policy Division

Topic: Reviews

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Barnett asked:

1. What is the total number of Reviews *both completed and ongoing* in the portfolio/agency or affecting the portfolio agency since November 2007?
2. Please provide a breakdown of reviews completed since the government came to office (only those commenced after the current government came to office) including
 - when those reviews were provided to Government,
 - estimated cost of producing each review (and total cost) and
 - if the Government has responded to the review or information about when the Government has indicated it will/will not respond to the review.
3. How many reviews are ongoing?
4. How many reviews have been completed since additional estimates?
5. What further reviews are planned in the portfolio/agency?

Answer:

1. Thirteen reviews were either completed or are ongoing since November 2007.
2. Four major policy reviews have been completed since November 2007. These reviews, their dates of conclusion and their estimated cost are as follows:

Review title	Date provided to government	Estimated and total cost	Government response to the review
2008 Dairy Quota Review	6 June 2008	\$420 000	The minister responded on 30 January 2009.
Review of Quarantine and Biosecurity Arrangements (Beale Review)	30 September 2008	\$1.743 million	The government provided its preliminary response on 18 December 2008 (see media release DAFF08/174B)

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Question: CPD 07 (continued)

Drought Policy Review - Bureau of Meteorology and CSIRO Climatic Assessment report - Expert Social Panel report - Productivity Commission report into the economic impact of drought	4 July 2008 30 September 2008 27 February 2009	\$3.877 million	On 5 May 2010 the Australian Government, in partnership with the Western Australian (WA) Government, announced a pilot of drought reform measures in part of WA. The pilot will test a package of new measures in response to the national review of drought policy. The new measures will be in place from 1 July 2010 to 30 June 2011. The measures are designed to move from a crisis management approach to risk management.
Review of testing protocols of imported seafood	13 May 2010	\$57 860	The government has noted the findings of the review, the recommendations of which are being implemented.

3. Nine major policy reviews in the portfolio are ongoing. These reviews, their anticipated dates of conclusion and their estimated cost are as follows:

Review Title	Anticipated End Date	Estimated Cost
Internal government review of biofuels policy— joint review by DAFF and Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism (DRET). DRET has policy lead for this review.	Under consideration by government.	\$109 615 (DAFF costs)

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Question: CPD 07 (continued)

Primary Industries Ministerial Council Equine Influenza Expert Review Panel (PIMC EI)	Report received in October 2009 and remains under PIMC consideration.	\$330 500 Of this, an estimated \$320 000 will be shared by the Commonwealth and states in accordance with an agreed ministerial council formula.
Wheat Export Marketing Arrangements - Public Inquiry	Report received in July 2010 and remains under consideration by government.	The review was undertaken by the Productivity Commission at nil cost to the department.
Review of the Sugar Industry Reform Program (SIRP) 2004 to 2008	October 2010	\$420 000
Review of AQUAPLAN 2005-2010, Australia's National Strategic Plan for Aquatic Animal Health	October 2010	\$15 000 estimated (production and printing only)
Feasibility of alternatives to the cancellation provisions under the <i>Fisheries Management Act 1991</i>	31 December 2010	Approximately \$132 500
Review and revision of the 2004 National Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks	28 February 2011	\$141 938.50
1994 National Recreational Fishing Policy Review	June 2011	\$197 436 ¹
DAFF and Department of Finance and Deregulation: Efficiency & Effectiveness Review of the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority	July 2011	\$49 500 (DAFF will meet the cost of the review).

4. No reviews have been completed since additional estimates.

¹ The February Additional Estimates reported \$2m which was the total value of the Recreational Fishing Industry Development Strategy (RFIDS). The policy review represents one element of the RFIDS program. The figure of \$197 436 is the total administered cost for the Recreational Fishing Advisory Committee (RFAC) in 2008-09 and 2009-10, which undertook the work. The review of the 1994 National Recreational Fishing Policy constituted a portion of this expenditure.

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Question: CPD 07 (continued)

5. The pilot will be reviewed in 2011 to inform ongoing work on national drought policy reform.