



Senator the Hon. Glenn Sterle  
Chairman  
Senate Rural Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee  
Department of the Senate  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Senator Sterle

Having reviewed the transcript of the Budget Estimates hearing conducted by the Senate Rural Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee on 21 and 22 May 2012, I would like to make the following corrections, all of which relate to 22 May 2012. There are no corrections for the proof Hansard of 21 May 2012.

The first correction relates to an answer provided by Mr Neil to a question from Senator Ian MacDonald, which can be found on page 46 of the proof Hansard:

**Senator IAN MACDONALD:** In international fisheries, does the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission come within your purview? Can you tell me how progress is being made there?

**Mr Neil:** The WCPFC met in April.

Mr Neil mistakenly stated the incorrect month for the WCPFC meeting. The correct response should read:

**Mr Neil:** The WCPFC met in March.

The second correction relates to an answer provided by Mr Neil to a question from Senator Ian MacDonald, which can be found on page 47 of the proof Hansard:

**Senator IAN MACDONALD:** What finances do we contribute?

**Mr Neil:** The most recent figure I have for our contribution to the IOTC is for 2009-10 and it was \$63,985.

Mr Neil mistakenly stated only a portion of the annual contribution to the IOTC. The correct response should read:

**Mr Neil:** The Australian contribution to the IOTC for the 2010 calendar year was US\$108 954.

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The third correction relates to a response from Mr Neil to a question from Senator Ian MacDonald, which can be found on page 47 of the proof Hansard:

**Senator IAN MACDONALD:** What finances do we contribute?

**Mr Neil:** I am sorry; the WCPFC is the one below it. It is \$61,688.

Mr Neil mistakenly stated only a portion of the annual contribution to the WCPFC. The correct response should read:

**Mr Neil:** I am sorry; the WCPFC is the one below it. It was USD\$104,996 for the 2010 calendar year.

The fourth correction relates to an answer from Mr Thompson to a question asked by Senator Colbeck which can be found on page 52 of the proof Hansard:

**Senator COLBECK:** I probably should have asked this of AFMA in relation to the aerial survey this year: do you have anything on that, or would I have to have asked that of AFMA?

**Mr Thompson:** If it is the SBT aerial survey, we can provide some information. AFMA actually manages that survey.

Mr Thompson mistakenly stated the incorrect agency was managing the aerial survey. The correct response should read:

**Mr Thompson:** If it is the SBT aerial survey, we can provide some information. CSIRO actually manages that survey, as contracted by DAFF.

The fifth correction relates to an answer to a question by Senator Rhiannon which can be found on page 102 of the proof Hansard:

**Senator RHIANNON:** How many websites do you have at the moment that are active for MLA?

**Mr Hansen:** It is probably in the vicinity of 12 at the moment.

Mr Hansen mistakenly stated the incorrect number of Meat and Livestock Australia websites. The correct response should read:

**Mr Hansen:** It is probably in the vicinity of 16 at the moment.

The sixth correction relates to an answer to a question by Senator Rhiannon which can be found on page 103 of the proof Hansard:

**Senator RHIANNON:** We will come back to that one. I have one question that I will put on notice. It is also from the submission from the Australian Beef Association—if you could provide an explanation—and the submission states:

\$17 million, or about a quarter of MLA's 2009-10 R&D budget was allocated to organisations associated with nine of the 12 individuals who served as MLA board members in the year 2009-10. Individually and collectively MLA board members had a major conflict of interest every time they considered matters relating to R&D.

Could you take on notice what has been done to clean up that problem and remove the conflict of interest?

**Mr Hansen:** Their endeavour to do so received less than 10 per cent support of eligible votes at an AGM.

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Mr Hansen mistakenly stated approximate level of support shown for a motion put forward by the Australian Beef Association at a Meat and Livestock Australia AGM. The correct response should read:

**Mr Hansen:** Their endeavour to do so received 10 per cent support of eligible votes at an AGM.

The seventh correction relates to an answer to a question by Senator Edwards which can be found of page 110 of the proof Hansard:

**Senator EDWARDS:** How long have we been doing the China one? Seven years?

**Ms Evans:** We started negotiated with China in May 2005, so about the same length of time.

Ms Evans mistakenly stated the incorrect start date for the China FTA negotiations. The correct response should read:

**Ms Evans:** We started negotiations with China in April 2005, so about the same length of time.

The eight correction relates to a response to a question by Senator Colbeck which can be found on page 112 of the proof Hansard:

**Senator COLBECK:** So that basically opens up for new players to go in under that 35 per cent cap?

**Ms Evans:** There was immediate elimination of tariffs on processed foods.

Ms Evans incorrectly implied that all processed food tariffs would be eliminated on entry into force of the agreement. The correct response should read:

**Ms Evans:** There was immediate elimination of virtually all tariffs on processed foods.

The ninth correction relates to a response to a question by Senator Nash which can be found on page 112 of the proof Hansard:

**Senator NASH:** From what to what?

**Ms Evans:** The second part of the agreement is that there has been a liberalisation of the way that that quota will be allocated. In the past there were some restrictions on what type of milk or which type of seller could obtain the quota. Those restrictions have now been removed for at least 35 per cent of the quota amount.

Ms Evans mistakenly omitted some detail in her response. The correct response should read:

**Ms Evans:** The second part of the agreement is that there has been a liberalisation of the way that that quota will be allocated. In the past there were some restrictions on what type of milk or which type of seller could obtain the quota. Those restrictions have now been removed for at least 35 percent of the quota amount for two of the three liquid milk tariff lines.

The tenth correction relates to a question by Senator Nash which can be found on page 113 of the proof Hansard:

**Senator NASH:** Which ones were they?

**Ms Evans:** Again, I do not have a complete list. I can take it on notice to find them. But my understanding is that they are things like fibreboard and things like that in the forest products area. But under the ASEAN agreement we already had agreement for elimination of tariffs for the agricultural products.

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I wish to advise the committee that since the hearing it has been drawn to my attention that some relevant agricultural tariffs were not included in Ms Evans' response. The response should read:

**Ms Evans:** For agriculture, tariffs on most commodities were already at zero, either under Australia's applied tariff or as part of our commitments under the ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (AANZFTA). Australia applies tariffs on bamboo shoots and a range of other miscellaneous vegetables and mixtures of vegetables that will be eliminated on entry into force of MAFTA. The tariffs on these products were already scheduled to be reduced to zero in 2020 under the ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement.

Thank you for the opportunity to review the transcript of the Budget Estimates Hearing from May 2012 and to provide clarification on the above points.

Yours sincerely



Cathrine Stephenson  
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5 July 2012