

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates May 2013
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 194

Division/Agency: Governance Division/Interim Inspector General of Biosecurity
Topic: Interim Inspector-General of Biosecurity (IIGB) Reports
Proof Hansard page: 19 (27/05/2013)

Senator HEFFERNAN asked:

Senator HEFFERNAN: How do you measure an outcome for yourself and your four offsidiers?

Dr Dunn: An outcome I think is the report, which shows that there has been an examination of the system, findings on where there are weaknesses in that and some appropriate recommendations, where necessary, that are both implementable and reasonable.

Senator HEFFERNAN: Through you, Minister: are we as a committee able to get one of these reports and just see what that—what you just said—really means?

Dr Dunn: My reports are published on the internet, as we have discussed before.

Senator HEFFERNAN: You might just table it.

Senator Ludwig: We are happy to table the last couple.

Senator HEFFERNAN: I would be interested to see this postal one. Back to you, Senator Back.

Answer:

The report referred to by Senator Heffernan as ‘this postal one’ is not yet available. The Interim Inspector General of Biosecurity (IIGB) has commenced audit fieldwork to assess the performance of biosecurity risk management measures for international mail and air cargo. Audit fieldwork is still in progress and the report will be available once the audit is completed.

The IIGB has provided the audit reports listed below to the Minister. These audit reports are available on the department’s website at:

www.daff.gov.au/about/publications/interim-inspector-general-of-biosecurity

- *Desktop review of the approval of offshore pre-export quarantine facilities for importing horses to Australia*
- *Audit of the Werribee Post-arrival Quarantine Facility (Melbourne, Victoria)*
- *Audit of Eastern Creek Animal Quarantine Station (Sydney, New South Wales)*
- *An examination of factors that led to the release into Australia of a consignment of soil (declared as fertiliser) and interception at the border of another consignment of soil (declared as fertiliser) June 2012*
- *Interim Inspector General of Biosecurity Annual Report 2010-11*
- *Summary report to the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, of the visit to the United States of America (US) and Canada by Australia's Interim Inspector General of Biosecurity*

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Question: 194 (continued)

- *An examination of the performance of the systems that the biosecurity divisions of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry has in place to detect and mitigate biosecurity risks before they get to Australia's border. Importation of plant nursery stock, July 2011*
- *An examination of the performance of the systems that the biosecurity divisions of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry has in place to manage biosecurity risks along entry pathways. Citrus canker, July 2011*
- *Pre-export Procedures for Horses from Japan, June 2010*
- *An examination of what caused a consignment of imported raw peeled prawns that tested positive for White Spot Syndrome Virus (WSSV) to be mistakenly released into Australia by the Biosecurity Services Group (BSG), November 2010, part 1*
- *An examination of the likelihood of imported raw peeled prawns that tested positive for White Spot Syndrome Virus (WSSV) and were mistakenly released into Australia by the Biosecurity Services Group (BSG) entering high risk pathways and of then causing WSSV to establish in Australia, November 2010, part 2*
- *Interim Inspector General of Biosecurity Annual Report 2009-10*
- *Equine Pre-export Procedures in Singapore, July 2010*
- *Management of quarantine waste from international vessels at Australian seaports, June 2010*
- *Assessment of the Biosecurity Services Group internal audit of Sandown Post-arrival Quarantine Facility, June 2010*
- *Australian Veterinary Emergency Plan (AUSVETPLAN), June 2010*
- *Quarantine surveillance following post-arrival quarantine for specified horses after importation to Australia, May 2010*
- *Import Health Certification for Horses Imported to Australia, November 2009*
- *Report of the Interim Inspector General of Horse Importation, April 2009 (this report was undertaken by the Interim Inspector General of Horse Importation, and finalised by the Interim Inspector General of Biosecurity).*

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Question: 195

Division/Agency: Governance Division/Interim Inspector General of Biosecurity

Topic: Interim Inspector-General of Biosecurity Achievements

Proof Hansard page: 20 (27/05/2013)

Senator HEFFERNAN asked:

Senator HEFFERNAN: Would you like to summarise your biggest achievements in your role and give it to us on notice? It is a great curiosity and I think information takes away worry.

Dr Dunn: I would be happy to take that on notice, Senator.

Answer:

Dr Kevin Dunn was appointed as the Interim Inspector General of Biosecurity (IIGB) on 1 July 2009. The scope of IIGB responsibilities covers the evaluation and verification of biosecurity systems and risk management measures across the entire biosecurity continuum. The IIGB role subsumed that of the Interim Inspector-General of Horse Importation (IIGHI), which was established following the Callinan Inquiry into the 2007 equine influenza outbreak in Australia.

The Callinan inquiry initiated major reforms in horse biosecurity. Emanating from those reforms, Dr Dunn as the IIGHI, completed an extensive body of work to audit overseas pre-export quarantine (PEQ) facilities and post-arrival quarantine facilities in Australia. A major achievement of that work was the implementation of several procedural recommendations to improve horse import procedures.

Since 2009, Dr Dunn has maintained his focus on the essential biosecurity reforms recommended by Callinan by developing an audit methodology for the ongoing examination of the processes undertaken by DAFF Biosecurity in approving and monitoring offshore pre-export quarantine facilities for importing horses to Australia.

The IIGB has now completed 15 audit reports and issued a total of 67 recommendations for implementation by DAFF. To date, DAFF has advised that 65 recommendations have been implemented. Implementation of the 2 remaining recommendations is in progress. These completed reports are available on the DAFF website at:

<http://www.daff.gov.au/about/publications/interim-inspector-general-of-biosecurity>.

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Question: 195 (continued)

From the 15 audits completed to date the IIGB has found:

- no critical system defects
- in general there are appropriate controls in place to manage the identified biosecurity risks, however system improvements were found to be needed in specific areas
- biosecurity officers are generally well-trained and motivated to handle biosecurity risks
- a need to significantly enhance surveillance and intelligence systems in DAFF to better detect and deter non-compliance with biosecurity requirements.

The IIGB findings have lead to significant procedural control improvements to strengthen biosecurity risk management in the following areas:

- monitoring, gathering and assessment of biosecurity information
- communication regarding Australian import conditions
- approval, auditing, monitoring and review processes, for offshore control schemes
- consistency of guidance material for the departmental biosecurity officers.