

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Supplementary Budget Estimates October 2009
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: CSD 01

Division/Agency: Corporate Services Division

Topic: Staffing

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Colbeck asked:

1. What have been the primary areas of cutbacks since the May Budget was announced? Please provide a breakdown by area and financial value.
2. What are the planned areas of cutbacks for the remaining parts of 2009-2010? Please provide a breakdown by area and financial value.
3. What was the cost of redundancies for the period 2008-2009 (actual) and for 2009-2010 (budget)?

Answer:

1 & 2. As outlined in the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry 2008-09 Annual Report (Secretary's Review, pxi), in responding to the reduction in overall departmental appropriations the department has been guided by the need to:

- continue to meet statutory requirements and deliver on election commitments and the minister's priorities
- maintain core capacity and skills
- make better use of existing expertise and
- properly resource emerging areas of work.

The department's resources have been refocused in light of these criteria, with priorities including:

- reforming national biosecurity functions while maintaining a delivery focus
- supporting the government's reform of drought policy and programs while continuing exceptional circumstances assistance to people in drought-declared areas
- efficiently delivering key programs such as *Australia's Farming Future* and *Caring for our Country*
- helping industries become more productive, including by promoting their access to markets and improving economic analysis of their productivity drivers and
- helping the government integrate its climate change and food policy objectives.

3. The cost of redundancies for the period 2008-2009 was \$1,295,055 and the expected cost for 2009-2010 is \$3,736,969.

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Question: CSD 02

Division/Agency: Corporate Services Division

Topic: Staffing

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Colbeck asked:

1. What has been the level of FTEs at DAFF, broken down by division (or agency) and branch, over the financial years 2007-2008, 2008-2009, currently and end of 2009-10 (expected)?
2. Which parts of the Department have seen a loss in FTEs?
3. How many part time staff are in the Department currently? What was the level of part time staff at the end of 2007-2008 and 2008-2009? What is the projected level?
4. How many contractors are employed by the Department currently? What was the level of contractors at the end of 2007-2008 and 2008-2009?
5. What is the level of SES staff for the periods 2008-2009, currently and projected? (broken down by separate levels)?
6. What was the value of redundancies in the period 2008-2009 and what is projected for the period 2009-2010?
7. How many staff reapplied for their positions in the period 2008-2009? And between 1 July 2009 and now?
8. How many graduates were there for the period 2008-2009? How many of these have continued employment in the Department? Is it still policy to not have a graduate program this coming year? When will the graduate program re-start? How many graduates is the Department expected to take-in when it re-starts the program?
9. How many retirements were there for the period 2008-2009? How many are projected for 2009-2010?
10. What was the total number of sick leave days taken in the period 2008-2009? And between 1 July 2009 and now? What was the total number of sick leave days taken by SES staff in the same periods?

Answer:

1. There was a major restructure of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry on 1 July 2009, along with a number of smaller restructures during the period 30 June 2008 to 30 June 2009. FTE figures by division are provided in the table below. The quantity of data that would be produced if FTE figures were to be provided by branch would be significant and it would be an unreasonable diversion of departmental resources to provide this level of detailed information.

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Question: CSD 02 (continued)

Division	30 June 08 FTE	30 June 09 FTE	30 Sept 09 FTE
ABARE	136.7	145.2	133.7
Agricultural Productivity	N/A	82.1	106.5
AQIS	3065.9	3151.9	N/A
Biosecurity Australia	130.5	124.0	N/A
Biosecurity Services Group	N/A	N/A	3302.7
Bureau of Rural Sciences	161.2	119.1	87.3
Climate Change	N/A	107.2	93.9
Corporate Finance	N/A	63.6	80.9*
Corporate Management	231.6	N/A	N/A
Corporate Policy	111.6	88.9	102.8*
Corporate Services	N/A	229.4	236.9*
Fisheries & Forestry	85.7	N/A	N/A
Food & Agriculture	76.8	N/A	N/A
International	90.8	N/A	N/A
Natural Resource Management	123.1	N/A	N/A
Prod Integrity Animal & Plant Health	154.1	162.3	N/A
Quarantine & Biosecurity Policy Unit	N/A	20.7	N/A
Rural Policy & Innovation	88.9	N/A	N/A
Sustainable Resource Management	N/A	147.3	142.6
Trade & Market Access	N/A	101.5	77.3
Graduates and Trainees	69.0	62.0	62.0
Total	4525.9	4605.1	4426.6

N/A = Not applicable – division not in existence at that time.

*Increases in these divisions reflect consolidation of corporate functions.

2. Refer to CSD 1, responses to questions 1 and 2 and the answer to question 1.
3. The Department currently employs 543.6 part time staff. The number of part time staff is not expected to change significantly at end June 2010.
4. The number of employees on non-ongoing contracts at 30 June 2008 was 190.6 FTE. The number of employees on non-ongoing contracts at 30 June 2009 was 88.95 FTE. At 30 September 2009 the number of employees on non-ongoing contracts was 71.65 FTE.
5. Please refer to page 202 of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Annual Report 2008-2009 for SES FTE figures. The SES FTE figures from 1 July 2009 to 30 September 2009 are provided in the table below. The overall numbers of SES are not expected to change significantly during 2009-2010.

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Question: CSD 02 (continued)

30 September 2009

Classification	FTE
SES1	73.7
SES2	21
SES3	5
Grand Total	100.7

6. Refer to CSD 1, response to question 3.
7. No employees reapplied for their positions in 2008-2009. Between 1 July 2009 and 30 September 2009 126 employees reapplied for their positions as part of the restructuring process.
8. There were 57 graduates for the 2008 calendar year and 52 for the 2009 calendar year. As at 26 October 2009, 37 of the 2008 intake and all of the current graduates are employed in the Department. ABARE will conduct a graduate intake for the 2010 calendar year. The department expects to recommence the general Graduate Development Program in 2011 with an intake of approximately 50 graduates.
9. 56 staff retired between in 2008-2009. It is not possible to accurately estimate retirements for 2009-2010, although it is anticipated that previous years' trends will continue.
10. The number of sick leave days for 2008-2009 and from 1 July 2009 to 30 September 2009 is shown in the table below.

Period	Category	FTE Days
2008-2009	All staff	51,029
	SES	272
1 July 2009 – 30 September 2009	All staff	14,111
	SES	148

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Question: CSD 03

Division/Agency: Corporate Services Division

Topic: Code of Conduct

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Colbeck asked:

How many Departmental employees were subject to an internal investigation owing to improper behaviour in the period 2008-2009 and from 1 July 2009 to now?

How many of these were SES employees?

What types of actions were taken against individuals?

How many employees were terminated?

Answers:

The Department investigated 69 employees for possible breaches of the APS Code of Conduct during 2008-2009 and a further 17 employees from 1 July 2009 to 26 October 2009. During 2008-09 14 breaches of the APS Code of Conduct were determined as a result of the investigations.

To disclose how many of these were SES employees could potentially breach the privacy of any individuals concerned.

The types of action taken against individuals who were found to have breached the APS Code of Conduct were formal counselling, administrative action, reprimand, deduction from salary by way of fine, reassignment of duties and termination of employment.

Two employees were terminated.

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Question: CSD 04

Division/Agency: Corporate Services Division

Topic: Stolen or Lost Items

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Colbeck asked:

1. What was the value of items stolen or lost from the department during the period 2008-2009?
2. And from 1 July 2009 to now?
Please give a breakdown of items with a value of more than \$10 000.

Answer:

1. Approximate replacement value of items stolen or lost (and not recovered) from the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry for the period 2008-2009 was \$16 055.
2. Approximate replacement value of items stolen or lost (and not recovered) from 1 July to now is \$12 925.

There were no items valued at more than \$10 000.

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Question: CSD 05

Division/Agency: Corporate Services Division
Topic: Carparking leases for departmental staff
Hansard Page: Written

Senator Colbeck asked:

What was the cost of the department leasing carparks for use by employees (broken down by city) during the period 2008-2009? And projections for 2009-10?

Answer:

1. The total cost for 2008-2009 was \$1 410 120 and the projected cost for 2009-2010 is \$1 541 822. A breakdown by city follows:

2008-09 Total Cost		2009-10 Projections	
• Adelaide	\$87 431	• Adelaide	\$90 998
• Brisbane	\$50 589	• Brisbane	\$68 230
• Canberra	\$1 028 477	• Cairns	\$50 000
• Darwin	\$28 126	• Canberra	\$1 064 379
• Griffith	\$507	• Darwin	\$29 282
• Melbourne	\$25 608	• Griffith	\$537
• Perth	\$76 034	• Melbourne	\$51 359
• Sydney	\$86 510	• Perth	\$76 203
• Townsville	\$26 838	• Sydney	\$90 040
		• Townsville	\$20 794

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Question: CSD 06

Division/Agency: Corporate Services Division

Topic: Discretionary grants

Hansard Page: Written

Senators Colbeck and Nash asked:

Could the Department provide a list of all discretionary grants, including ad hoc and one-off grants since November 2007?

Please provide details of the recipients, the intended use of the grants and what locations have benefited from the grants.

Answer:

Attachment 1 provides a list of all discretionary grants from 1 November 2007 to 31 December 2008 for the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, including the intended use of the grants and what state benefited from the grants. It is inappropriate for the department to release the names of individual recipients on privacy grounds.

A list of all discretionary grants from 1 January 2009 to 31 October 2009 is available on the department's website at http://www.daff.gov.au/about/obligations/grants_reporting_requirements.

The reporting arrangements for discretionary grants changed from 1 January 2009 with agencies being required to publish the details of all grants, including the names of recipients. Since January 2009, all recipients have been advised that their names and the details of all grants would be published, in accordance to government policy.

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Question: CSD 07

Division/Agency: Corporate Services Division

Topic: Staffing Levels

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Nash asked:

1. What are the current staffing levels for SES and non-SES officers?
2. What is the breakdown by location?

Answer:

The FTE staffing level and location as at 30 September 2009 is shown in the table below along with the breakdown by State.

Classification	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	OS	Total
GRAD	56									56
APS1	10.4	1								11.4
APS2	10.9	111.8	0.9	52.5	15.1		67.1	6.5		264.8
APS3	30.6	259.6	5.9	235.7	49.8	4	165.5	117.1		868.2
APS4	161.9	289.3	23	171.5	61.9		161.3	75.9		944.8
APS5	261.3	107.6	13.8	98	25	2	72.4	45.5		625.6
APS6	373	57.5	7	70.2	23	3	63.1	28.9		625.7
EL1	408.5	23	4	23	8	1	17	13		497.5
EL2	365.5	10.4	4	18	6		12	7	9	431.9
SES1	62.7	2		2			1	1	5	73.7
SES2	21									21
SES3	5									5
Secretary	1									1
Total	1767.8	862.2	58.6	670.9	188.8	10	559.4	294.9	14	4426.6

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Question: CSD 08

Division/Agency: Corporate Services Division

Topic: Changes in ASL

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Nash asked:

1. What have been the changes in ASL since November 2007?
2. Why have these changes occurred?
3. What have been the Budgetary implications?

Answer:

1. The Average Staffing Level (ASL) is calculated by taking the average FTE over the financial year or part thereof and is usually based on monthly intervals. The change in ASL between November 2007 and 30 September 2009 has been an increase of 76.8 ASL.
2. Movements in ASL occur due to changes in government priorities and varying staffing requirements in quarantine border operations due to fluctuations in trade volume.
3. Departmental funding is set at a whole of department level and inputs (including actual ASL) are managed within that funding envelope.

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Question: CSD 09

Division/Agency: Corporate Services Division

Topic: Staff Reductions

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Nash asked:

1. In the case of reductions in staff numbers, how have these reductions been absorbed by the Department?
2. What functions have been sacrificed and why?

Answer:

Please see response to CSD 1, questions 1 and 2.

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Question: CSD 10

Division/Agency: Corporate Services Division

Topic: Staff reductions

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Nash asked:

1. Has there been a target for staff reductions to achieve savings?
2. What is that target and what strategy is being implemented to achieve this?

Answer:

- 1 & 2. As outlined in Budget Related Paper No.1.1 of the Portfolio Budget Statement 2009-10, Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Portfolio at pages 33 and 69, the estimated impact of departmental funding reductions is a reduction of 250 Average Staffing Level (ASL) in 2009/2010. This average staffing level for the year is an estimate only – not a target. The department will be focusing on managing its overall appropriation rather than achieving a particular staffing level. The department is seeking to achieve changes to staffing levels through natural attrition and by redeploying staff to suitable jobs elsewhere within the department.

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Question: CSD 11

Division/Agency: Corporate Services Division

Topic: Staff Retrenchments

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Nash asked:

1. Have any voluntary or involuntary redundancies been offered to staff?
2. If so, how have staff been identified for such offers?
3. Are there such plans for the future?

Answer:

1. Between 1 July 2009 and 26 October 2009 the Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry offered 53 voluntary retrenchments to staff and zero involuntary retrenchments.
2. Staff were identified for an offer of voluntary retrenchment as a result of not being placed/redeployed through merit assessment processes conducted in accordance with the *Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry Collective Agreement 2009-2011*. Staff covered by the *Meat Program Agreement 2007-2010* were offered voluntary retrenchment in accordance with the provisions of that agreement.
3. Not at this time.

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Question: CSD 12

Division/Agency: Corporate Services Division

Topic: Consultancy Contracts

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Nash asked:

1. How much has the Department spent on consultancy services since November 2007?
2. How can the department justify this expenditure?

Answer:

1. The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry has engaged consultancy services for the period 1 December 2007 to 30 September 2009 costing \$27 837 226.
2. The department hires consultants where specialised or professional skills are not available in the department or where there is an identified need for independent research or assessment.

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Question: CSD 13

Division/Agency: Corporate Services Division

Topic: Consultancy Contracts

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Nash asked:

Could the Department provide a complete list of current consultancy services? For each consultancy, please indicate the rationale for the project and its intended use. For each consultancy, please indicate why the Department or its agencies could not have undertaken the work themselves.

Answer:

1. The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry has 89 consultancy contracts active as at 26 October 2009. Details of the department's current consultancy contracts, including descriptions, are available through AusTender, the government's electronic procurement information system at www.tenders.gov.au.
2. See response to CSD 12 (2).

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Question: CSD 14

Division/Agency: Corporate Services Division

Topic: Current Contracts

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Nash asked:

Could the Department provide a complete list of current contracts? Please indicate the rationale for each service provided and its intended use.

Answer:

See response to CSD 13 (1).

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Question: CSD 15

Division/Agency: Corporate Services Division

Topic: Job Losses

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Nash asked:

1. Budget Related Paper No. 1.1, Portfolio Budget Statements 2009 -10, Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Portfolio, page 69, Average Staffing Level shows a cut of 125 jobs in 2009 -10 from the previous year, please provide a breakdown from which programs each of these jobs will be lost.
2. Which programs will be affected by job losses? (please included which areas and classification the terminated positions will be?)
3. Will these job losses be as a result of forced redundancies, voluntary redundancies, natural attrition or by axing the graduate program?
4. If a mix of all of these please provide a list of how many fall into each category and where those positions are currently located?
5. What rights do employees have to refuse the termination of their jobs? Is any form of arbitration available for these employees which could over-turn the Departments decision to terminate their employment?
6. How many positions which are to be terminated will be outsourced?

Answer:

1. & 2. Please see response to CSD 1, questions 1 and 2.
- 3 & 4. The Department is managing the changes to staffing levels through natural attrition, voluntary retrenchments and by suspending the general departmental graduate program for the 2010 calendar year. Between 1 July and 26 October 2009 48 staff accepted voluntary retrenchments and 159 left through natural attrition.
5. Where an employee's duties cease to exist and the employee is excess to the department's requirements the redeployment, reduction and retention provisions of the *Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Collective Agreement 2009 – 2011* apply. Under these provisions employees who are not able to be reassigned to other duties within the department or the APS are offered voluntary retrenchment and if they accept the offer their employment will be terminated. Employees who do not accept the offer may be terminated at the end of a retention period. Where an employee's employment is terminated the employee may make application to Fair Work Australia for unfair dismissal. However, a genuine redundancy does not constitute unfair dismissal.
6. There are no plans to outsource any of the functions which have been affected by the restructure.

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Question: CSD 16

Division/Agency: Corporate Services Division

Topic: Bottled water supplies

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Colbeck asked:

What was the total cost of bottled water paid for by the department during the period 2008-2009?

Answer:

As per response to Senate Question On Notice 1976 tabled on 20 August 2009, the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry's total expenditure on water coolers and spring water services for the 2008-09 financial year was \$6,307 (excl. GST). For a number of the department's properties, water coolers and spring water services are not required because they have inbuilt instant boiled/chilled water mixer taps.

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Question: CSD 17

Division/Agency: Corporate Services Division

Topic: Retreats/Conferences

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Colbeck asked:

What was the cost to the Department of any retreats/conferences (or similar) taken by its staff? Broken down by retreat/conference name, its purpose and cost.

Answer:

The Department did not undertake any retreats during this period. Set out below are details of planning days held outside the normal workplace. The total cost of these activities for the period 1 January 2008 to 26 October 2009 was \$245,066.

Planning Day Name	Purpose	Cost
AQIS - Cargo Group	To review the 2007-08 business plan	\$1025
AQIS – horticultural and grain conference	To develop strategic plans, review current procedures and develop training for the implementation of new standard operating procedures	\$1120
Climate Change Division - Drought Policy Review Branch planning day	To develop 2009-10 branch objectives for the branch plan	\$1190
Bureau of Rural Sciences (BRS)- social sciences program conference	To develop 2008-09 program objectives for the branch plan	\$1217
BRS - water sciences program conference	To develop 2008-09 program objectives for the branch plan	\$1235
BRS - Fisheries and Marine Sciences program conference	To develop 2008-09 program objectives for the branch plan	\$1235
AQIS Leadership Team Network	To develop and review strategic plans to implement the 2009-10 business plan	\$1436
BRS – Climate Impact Sciences conference	To develop 2008-09 program objectives for the branch plan	\$1466
ABARE Resources & Energy Branch planning day	To develop 2009-10 objectives for the branch plan	\$1477

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Planning Day Name	Purpose	Cost
BRS - Land and Forest Sciences program conference	To develop 2008-09 program objectives for the branch plan	\$1538
AQIS Risk Workshop	To consider and rate business risks	\$1575
Sustainable Resource Management Division - branch planning day	To develop business objectives and priorities	\$1590
AQIS - Victorian horticultural and grain conference	To develop and review strategic plans to implement the 2009-10 business plan	\$1632
BRS - risk sciences program conference	To develop 2008-09 program objectives for the branch plan	\$1962
ABARE planning day	To develop 2008-09 objectives	\$2050
BSG regional managers business planning conference	To develop business and strategic plans	\$2080
BSG Victoria Leadership Team Network	To develop and review strategic plans to implement the business plan	\$2145
BSG - Victoria Border planning conference	To develop strategic plans to implement the business plan	\$2280
BRS - Climate Impact Sciences conference	To develop 2008-09 program objectives for the branch plan.	\$2353
Product Integrity Animal and Plant Health - The National Residue Survey planning day	To discuss future needs of clients, database development requirements and a quality assurance system.	\$2400
BSG South East Region Leadership Team Network	To develop strategic plans to implement recommendations of an Organisation Health project	\$2405
Corporate Services Division – Human Resources planning day	To develop the people management strategy for the next three years.	\$2486
BSG Victoria Leadership Team Network	To develop and review strategic plans to implement the business plan	\$2603

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Planning Day Name	Purpose	Cost
BSG - National Residue Survey planning day	To review process improvements since the previous planning day, plan new program development, consider a timetable for quality assurance certification, and review client requirements	\$2760
BRS - Land and Forest Sciences program conference	To develop program objectives for 2009-10 for inclusion in the branch plan	\$2824
BSG - Central East planning conference	To workshop and develop key projects to be delivered as part of the 2009-10 business plan	\$3125
Trade and Market Access Division - divisional workshop	To assess and develop strategies to address the key challenges facing the division for the next three years including external collaboration strategies	\$3314
Climate Change Division - Forestry Branch planning day	To undertake planning for the coming year.	\$3315
BSG - Biosecurity Managers workshop	To agree priorities and finalise implementation strategies to enable organisational realignment of biosecurity services from 1 July 2009	\$3514
Corporate Finance Division planning day	To define new roles and responsibilities	\$3803
AQIS - Northern Territory planning conference	To develop the 2008-09 NT regional business plan	\$4044
BSG - Biosecurity Managers workshop	To review the organisational realignment of biosecurity services that took effect on 1 July 2009 and to develop strategies to further progress recommendations outlined in the Beale review of Australia's quarantine and biosecurity arrangements	\$4209
BSG - Plant Technical Biosecurity conference	To identify and resolve operational technical issues	\$4355
AQIS - Animal and Plant Quarantine Branch planning day	To workshop issues/risks and develop key priorities to be included in the branch business plan, including clarification of roles and responsibilities of staff	\$4505
AQIS regional planning conference	Formulate regional business priorities for 2008-09 and draft the business plan	\$4560
AQIS - Victoria Managers conference	To conduct business planning and articulate objectives	\$4711

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Planning Day Name	Purpose	Cost
Biosecurity Australia (BA) planning day	To develop 2008-09 branch objectives for the branch plan	\$5732
AQIS - SA Regional planning conference	To identify risks and develop regional objectives and priorities for the 2008-09 regional business plan	\$6693
AQIS - Far North regional planning conference	To develop the 2008-09 regional business plan	\$6785
AQIS People Strategies workshop	To develop template for the AQIS business plan	\$7439
BSG - Biosecurity Managers workshop	To develop agreed positions and implementation strategies to enable organisational realignment of biosecurity services to take effect from 1 July 2009	\$8376
BSG - regional planning conference	Formulate regional business priorities for 2009-10 and draft the business plan	\$8868
AQIS - NSW planning conference	To workshop issues/risks and develop key priorities for the region for 2008-09 to be included in the regional business plan	\$9027
AQIS - Regional Managers conference	To develop business and strategic plans for the next financial year	\$10090
AQIS - WA regional planning conference	To identify risks and develop regional objectives and priorities for the 2008-09 regional business plan	\$10184
Corporate Policy division - Corporate Communications Branch Implementing Change and Planning Workshop	Workshop was part of the consolidation of communication services in the department	\$11205
BRS - Social Sciences program conference	To restructure the direction of the program work	\$11593
BRS - strategic planning conference	To develop a three year strategic plan commencing in 2008-09	\$15516
AQIS - Managers conference	To discuss and develop the program business plan and objectives, the organisation overview post Callinan, communications strategy, incident reporting and projects	\$17699
Product Integrity Animal and Plant Health -Planning Day	Set strategic directions for 2008-09, 2009-10	\$26320

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Question: CSD 18

Division/Agency: Corporate Services Division

Topic: Paper Supplies

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Colbeck asked:

1. What brand and type of printing paper does the Department currently use?
2. What is the country of manufacture of this paper?
3. What was the value of printing paper used in the period 2008-2009?

Answer:

1. Australian brand, 10% recycled A4 80gsm and Australian brand, 50% recycled A4 80gsm, COS Premium A4 80gsm, Office Works, A4 80gsm, Reflex Tints Coloured 80gsm, Reflex Ultra White 80gsm, Corporate Express White & Coloured, COS A4 80gsm, Fuji Xerox 75gsm and Perfect Print.
2. This paper was manufactured primarily in Australia (82%) and Indonesia (17%) with the remaining supplies sourced from South Africa and China.
3. \$179 286 Australian Paper and \$39 932 overseas sourced paper. Total spend was \$219 218

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Question: CSD 19

Division/Agency: Corporate Services Division

Topic: Christmas decorations

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Colbeck asked:

What was the cost of Christmas decorations (or similar) during the period 2008-09?
And from 1 July 2009 to now?

Answer:

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry did not purchase any Christmas decorations (or similar) during the period 2008-2009 or from 1 July 2009 to 26 October 2009.

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Question: CSD 20

Division/Agency: Corporate Services Division

Topic: Travel Expenditure

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Colbeck asked:

To ask the Minister representing the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry—

1. What was the total cost of travel undertaken by the Minister and Ministerial advisers during the period 2008-2009?
2. And from 1 July 2009 to now?
3. What was the total cost of travel taken by Departmental employees to accompany the Minister during the period 2008-2009?
4. And from 1 July 2009 to now?
5. What was the total cost of international travel taken by Departmental employees during the period 2008-2009?
6. And from 1 July 2009 to now?
7. And any projections?
8. What was the total cost of domestic travel taken by Departmental employees during the period 2008-2009?
9. And from 1 July 2009 to now?
10. And any projections?

Answer:

1. The total cost of travel undertaken by minister and the ministerial advisers during 2008-2009 was \$698,928.63. This includes all costs covered by the department and the Department of Finance and Deregulation in accordance with the Ministers of State Entitlements guidelines.
2. The total cost of travel undertaken by minister and ministerial advisers from 1 July 2009 to 19 October 2009 was \$226,738.56. This includes all costs covered by the department and the Department of Finance and Deregulation in accordance with the Ministers of State Entitlements guidelines.
3. \$208 186.
4. \$16 912.
5. \$7 440 244.
6. \$1 251 021.

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Question: CSD 20 (continued)

7. The estimated figure for international travel between October and December 2009 is \$ 956 265. Based on current YTD trends, the department projects that international travel expenditure for the remainder of 2009-10 will be less than in 2008-09.
8. \$14 068 398.
9. \$3 389 600.
10. Based on current YTD trends the department projects that domestic travel expenditure will be less than in 2008-09.

Note: Total costs for responses 3 to 9 cover airfares, car hire, accommodation and allowances as applicable.

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Question: CSD 21

Division/Agency: Corporate Services Division

Topic: Appointment of new AQIS Executive Director

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Colbeck asked:

1. What is the status regarding the replacement for Mr Delane?
2. Has a recruitment consultant been hired to identify candidates for the position?
3. What are the timeframes for an appointment?
4. What is the additional cost of appointing a new AQIS Executive Director? (e.g. relocation costs, cost of recruitment company, etc.)

Answer:

1. The position was advertised on 6 November 2009 and is currently being filled on temporary assignment.
2. Yes.
3. Depending on the circumstances of the selected applicant the department expects to fill the role in the first quarter of 2010.
4. The contract cost of the executive search and recruitment is approximately \$45,000. Relocation costs (if any) will depend on the current location and family circumstances of the selected applicant.

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Question: CSD 22

Division/Agency: Corporate Services Division

Topic: NRS Forward Projections

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Colbeck asked:

1. Can the department please provide an explanation for the levels of its forward projections for special appropriations through the National Residue Survey Administration Act 1992 s7?
2. Particularly, why there is a projected drop in levels from 2010-2011 through to 2011-2012?

Answer:

The department estimates special appropriation expenses based on the information available at the time of budget preparation. This information may include ABARE Commodity Reports, relevant industry forecasts, prior year levy collection trends and GVP determinations.

Initial projections for 2010 through to 2012 were determined in the third quarter of 2008-2009 in response to anticipated declines in commodity transaction activity and live exports. The information available at the time suggested there may be fewer cattle and livestock transactions as a result of the drought and reduced stock availability.

The projections are only estimates and are subject to changing external factors. As a result, they are updated as new information becomes available.

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Question: CSD 23

Division/Agency: Corporate Services Division

Topic: Electoral data in grant schemes

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Nash asked:

Has electoral specific data been used by the current Government in any grants scheme since November 2007?

Answer:

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry does not use electoral specific data when administering grants schemes. Under the *Commonwealth Grant Guidelines*, since 1 July 2009 the minister is required to advise the Minister for Finance and Deregulation if he approves a grant in his own electorate – and as such the department is required to advise if a recommended application falls within his electorate.

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Question: CSD 24

Division/Agency: Corporate Services Division
Topic: CRDC Forward Projections
Hansard Page: Written

Senator Colbeck asked:

Can the Department please provide an explanation for the levels of its forward projections for special appropriations for the Cotton R&D Corporation from 2008-2009 through to 2012-2013?

Answer:

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry estimates special appropriation expenses based on the information available at the time of budget preparation. This information may include the ABARE Commodity Report, relevant industry forecasts, prior year levy collection trends and the Gross Value Production determination.

The projections are only estimates and are subject to changing external factors. As a result, they are updated as new information becomes available.