

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2012-2013, 30 & 31 May and 1 June 2012

**Question: E12-277**

**OUTCOME 14: Biosecurity and Emergency Response**

**Topic:** Antimicrobial Resistance

**Type of Question:** Written Question on Notice

**Number of pages:** 2

**Senator:** Senator Di Natale

**Question:**

In response to the 1998 Joint Expert Technical Advisory Committee on Antibiotic Resistance (JETACAR) report a number of committees were set up in order to ensure implementation of JETACAR recommendations including the Commonwealth Interdepartmental JETACAR Implementation Group (CIJIG), the expert advisory group EAGAR, the Australian Health Minister's Conference AHMC JETACAR Taskforce, Primary Industries Standing Committee (PISC) JETACAR Taskforce and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (SCARM) JETACAR Taskforce.

- a) Are any of these bodies still active and are there any other committees in addition to the abovementioned which are currently managing the response to JETACAR or the issue of AMR in Australia?
- b) If not, why not? If any of these bodies have been wound up, how was the work given to these committees managed after they were disbanded?

**Answer:**

- a) None of the above committees remain active. A new committee has been established this year under the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee – the Antimicrobial Resistance Standing Committee (AMRSC). The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry will be represented on AMRSC.
- b) Many of the Department of Health and Ageing's committee structures are time limited, established to provide advice or oversee a particular body of work. The Department also conducts regular reviews of its committee structure to improve efficiency. The Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) related committees referenced above have been wound up as they had essentially done their job and as a result of other emerging health protection priorities. The Department has been able to use ongoing expert committees such as the Communicable Disease Network Australia and the Public Health Laboratory Network for advice on AMR related matters where required.

The work of the original committees was not handed on. Existing committee structures have been used to provide advice on AMR related issues as matters have arisen.

The Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry has provided additional information as follows:

The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) considers AMR when evaluating applications for the registration of new antibiotics and major extensions of use for existing antibiotics. The APVMA also independently reviews the applicant's risk assessment and seeks advice from the National Health Medical Research Council concerning the recommendations in the risk assessment. APVMA is also represented on AMRSC.

The APVMA also collects voluntarily supplied information from registrants on the quantity of veterinary antimicrobial products sold in Australia. The APVMA has prepared a report based on antimicrobial sales data for the period 2005-06 to 2009-10 and expects that it will be published by the end of 2012. The APVMA additionally holds information on the importation of unregistered antimicrobial products by veterinarians, and other permit holders.