



Australian Government
**Department of Agriculture
and Water Resources**

Senator Barry O'Sullivan
Chair
Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Senator O'Sullivan

I refer to your correspondence dated 23 March 2017 regarding the Committee's questions on notice (**QON**) arising from the Additional Senate Estimates on 28 February 2017 in relation to the outbreak of white spot disease in the Logan River, Operation Cattai and the suspension of the importation of uncooked prawns.

Search and retrieval of documents

The department has undertaken a large scale search and retrieval process to identify all documents which may be relevant to the committee's QON. The search and retrieval was undertaken in accordance with the **attached** document search protocol. With the exception of hard copy material, this process has been undertaken electronically. This has resulted in a thorough and independent document retrieval process.

The department is in the process of reviewing all documents that have initially been identified as possibly relevant to your request. This is a significant task which has involved the extraction and upload of a substantial volume of electronic data from drives and email accounts and the identification and coordination of a substantial volume of hard copy records into a specialised document discovery program.

As at 30 March 2017, the search and retrieval process has resulted in the following volume of documents for the department's review as follows:

- 237,717 documents (emails and attachments);
- approximately 10 archive boxes of hard copy documents which require assessment for relevance; and
- approximately 697,194 documents held in drives (noting that a number of complex IT based steps are required to refine this data set in order to quantify the number of relevant documents).

As at 4 April 2017, 75, 446 documents have been reviewed for relevance. The department currently has approximately 30 staff diverted to the document review process full-time. The rate of review is averaging approximately 12,000 documents per day.

Approach to production

During the Additional Estimates on 28 February 2017, you requested every single document but also requested that the information be presented in a form that could be sensibly reviewed by

the Committee. In your correspondence dated 23 March 2017 you revised the scope and timeframe for the department's response into three tranches.

Mindful of your request that the department provide the documents in a form that the Committee can work with, the department is focusing on reviewing the email data and hardcopy material as it is likely that key documents and correspondence would have been communicated in that form. Noting the revised scope, the department is undertaking targeted searches of the email and hard copy material.

The department is actively working towards the timeframe set by the Committee for tranches 1 and 2 of your request. Once the relevant documents have been further collated, the department will assess any sensitivities, noting in particular issues of privilege that may arising in the context of ongoing investigations. I will revert to you in relation to any issues regarding the production of those documents.

I would be happy to discuss the department's approach to your QON including the method of production that would be of most assistance to the Committee.

Yours sincerely

Daryl Quinlivan
Secretary
Department of Agriculture and Water Resources

5 April 2017

Attachment A – Document Search Protocol

Scope of search

Every document from 1 March 2016 – 28 February 2017 which relates to:

- the detection of white spot syndrome virus, and the outbreak of white spot disease, in the Logan River area;
- Operation Cattai; and/or
- the suspension of the importation of uncooked prawns,

which is in the possession of the Department. This includes, but is not limited to:

- briefings (including formal and informal briefs to First Assistant Secretaries, Deputy Secretaries, the Secretary, the Assistant Minister and the Minister);
- communications in any form, including emails, minutes, file notes, reports and text messages (this includes any drafts, and all versions, of a relevant communication);
- inspection and investigation records, whether they are in raw data form, printed form or technical form;
- audiotapes; and
- any other relevant documents in any form, whether handwritten or electronic.

In addition to the above, the Senate Committee has specifically requested the following documents:

1. physical records of inspections of imported prawns, including laboratory results and biosecurity officers' contemporaneous notes; and
2. question time briefs raised on the issue of imported prawns.

Action required

	Action	Description	Output	Due date
Task 1	Identify relevant personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify key personnel (both former and current) who are known to have been involved in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the Logan River outbreak; ○ Operation Cattai; and/or ○ the suspension of the importation of uncooked prawns and biosecurity risk assessments in the lead-up to the suspension. • In addition, request all staff (both former and current) within the division to advise you if they have been involved in the above activities or have relevant correspondence stored on their Outlook account. • Identify shared mailboxes which are likely to store correspondence which is relevant to the above activities. <p>These email accounts will be referred to IT. IT will undertake a document extraction task.</p>	Provide a list of the relevant personnel, including key personnel and staff who have reported involvement in the relevant activities, and shared mailboxes via email to: pdr@agriculture.gov.au .	9 March 2017
Task 2	Identify the location of electronic documents held on drives and systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the location of relevant electronic documents or records stored on drives (including, but not limited to, local and shared drives). • Identify the location of relevant electronic documents or records stored on systems (e.g. RM8, AIMS and BICON). 	Provide a list of all file pathways of relevant electronic documents or records in a document via email to: pdr@agriculture.gov.au .	10 March 2017

Task 3	Identify and produce hardcopy documents to OGC	<p>Locate and secure relevant hardcopy documents in the possession of the division. Those documents may be located at various locations and be in any form, including but not limited to any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • physical files; • handwritten file notes; • notebooks; • contemporaneous notes written by biosecurity officers; and • handwritten records of inspections or investigations. <p>The key contact should also provide the following detail in relation to each hardcopy document:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the original location of the document; • the date the document was created and/or modified; • the creator/modifier of the document; and • the appropriate security classification of the document. 	Provide hardcopy documents and relevant information to OGC. Please contact OGC to discuss document handover via email at: pdr@agriculture.gov.au .	Before 15 March 2017
Task 4	First Assistant Secretary to sign search certificate	First Assistant Secretary to sign off that Tasks 1 – 3 have been completed by the division by signing the document recovery minute provided by OGC.	Provide a signed and scanned copy of the search certificate to the OGC via email at: pdr@agriculture.gov.au .	15 March 2017