



Department of
Agriculture and Fisheries

Reference: CTS 19181/17

26 JUL 2017

Dr Jane Thompson
Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport
RRAT.SEN@aph.gov.au

Dear Dr Thompson

Thank you for your email of 6 July 2017 regarding the Proof Committee Hansard and Questions on Notice from the 27 June 2017 public hearing of the Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee Inquiry into biosecurity risks associated with the importation of seafood and seafood products (including uncooked prawns and uncooked prawn meat) into Australia.

There are two corrections to the Proof Committee Hansard that I wish to submit.

Firstly, the Australian Animal Health Laboratory (AAHL) is referenced as "ARL" in my testimony on page 20. In keeping with my previous testimony that referenced AAHL and given there is no laboratory with the initials ARL that Biosecurity Queensland used for testing related to the White Spot Disease outbreak, I believe ARL should be changed to AAHL in Hansard.

Secondly, the date Biosecurity Queensland officers formally advised the first suspected infected farm to cease water discharge was 25 November 2016, not 29 November 2016. The date of 29 November 2016 was stated in testimony by both me and Dr Jim Thompson (refer pages 17 and 23 respectively), however subsequent checking by departmental staff has confirmed that verbal discussions between the department and the owner of the suspected infected farm confirmed that, on 25 November 2016, the farm was not discharging from the affected pond. On 29 November 2016, the department followed up in writing with the farm owner advising not to discharge water from the ponds.

I have detailed the specific suggested changes to Hansard in Attachment 1 to this letter.

[Redacted]

Yours sincerely

[Redacted]

Dr Elizabeth Woods
Director-General
Department of Agriculture and Fisheries

[Redacted]

ATTACHMENT 1

REQUESTED CHANGES TO THE PROOF COMMITTEE HANSARD

Page and paragraph	Testimony from	Replacement testimony (refer strikethroughs and red font)
p. 17, para 9	Dr Woods	<p>On 25 November 2016, departmental officers conducted a site visit to provide biosecurity advice and take live samples for analysis. The farm was advised to cease water discharge and was given advice on chlorine treatment. It was verbally confirmed that the farm was not discharging from the affected pond and had taken action to fill in Monk drain in the event positive test results come back. On 29 November Biosecurity Queensland followed up in writing asked that the producer not discharge of water from the production ponds/settlement ponds until diagnostics had comprehensively excluded other potential exotic pathogens in the diseased shrimp and, that if water exchange had occurred, all the pond water was to be held in the settlement pond until the disease diagnosis had been confirmed.</p>
p. 20, para 7	Dr Woods	<p>Yes. I can confirm that. That was an ARL AAHL confirmation on 7 December. So we must have been very quickly starting to look in the wild.</p>
p. 23, para 13	Dr Thompson	<p>There was action taken on the 22nd, obviously, with prawns. My understanding is that on the 25th 29th we directed that water not be discharged from the farms. There may have been water discharged prior to that, but we had not indicated to anybody not to do that. So my understanding is it was the 25th 29th when a direction was made around that—there would be no further discharges after that.</p>