



Australian Government
Department of Defence
Defence Support Group

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DGIAD-ID/OUT/2011/AF8186675

The Hon Janelle Saffin MP

Chair

Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works

Parliament House

CANBERRA ACT 2600

Supp. Submission No. 1.2

(DSTO Scottsdale)

 Date: 15/08/2011

Dear Ms Saffin

**REINVESTMENT IN ADF SPECIFIC NUTRITIONAL CAPABILITY – DEFENCE
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ORGANISATION – SCOTTSDALE, TASMANIA –
QUESTION ON NOTICE - COUNTRY OF ORIGIN OF INGREDIENTS**

On Wednesday 27 July 2011, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works held a hearing on the Reinvestment in Australian Defence Force Specific Nutritional Capability Project – Defence Science and Technology Organisation at Scottsdale Tasmania. At the hearing, Mr John Forrest MP, Member for Mallee, stated:

“Mr Secker wants to know if we are purchasing vegetables from overseas in any of the inputs into the products we produce here. Are they all good Aussie products?”

Due to time constraints at the hearing, Defence took this question on notice and provides the following response.

As advised at the hearing, the Scottsdale facility sources the components of the freeze-dried ration packs from a local wholesaler. The wholesaler obtains their products through a variety of mechanisms. In response to the above question, Defence would like to add the following information.

In regard to speculation that the carrots used in the freeze dried foods have come from overseas, the Defence Science and Technology Organisation (DSTO) advises that in the 2010 and 2011 calendar years, carrots were sourced from a Tasmanian wholesaler who supplied carrots described as Product of Australia which were processed in Devonport, Tasmania.

As indicated to the Committee, there are some overseas products in some of the specialised food products that are produced at the Scottsdale facility. Currently these include A10 size canned mushrooms and A10 size canned bamboo shoots labelled as Product of China; crushed garlic (1kg tub) labelled as Packaged in Australia but the manufacturer's product specification sheet states that the country of origin is China; Black Eye Beans (dried), Cannellini Beans (dried) and Haricot Beans (dried) labelled as product of USA; A10 size canned cut baby corn labelled as Product of Vietnam (sometimes Product of Thailand); and pearl couscous from Israel.

Last year the cheese was labelled as Packed in Australia from New Zealand cheese. The various sauces, spices and similar ingredients are typically labelled as being manufactured in Australia from imported ingredients.

DSTO purchases are in accordance with the Commonwealth Procurement Guidelines which state that procurement methods must not discriminate against potential suppliers due to their degree of foreign affiliation or ownership, location or size. The property or services on offer must be considered on the basis of their suitability for their intended purpose and not on the basis of their origin. DSTO purchases ingredients for the production of freeze dried meals from Australian wholesalers. The countries of origin of the ingredients can vary from year to year depending on how and where the wholesalers source their range of products.

As advised at the hearing, the letting of the tender for the production of the combat ration packs is administered by the Defence Materiel Organisation in accordance with Commonwealth Procurement Guidelines.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'D' followed by a horizontal line and a small loop at the end.

D.S. Naumann
Director General
Infrastructure Asset Development Branch

12 August 2011