

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates February 2017

Agriculture and Water Resources

Question Number: 9

Division/Agency: Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority

Topic: Staffing numbers

Proof Hansard Page: 46

Senator STERLE asked:

Senator STERLE: I am sorry I interrupted Senator Brown. Could you give us an indication of the numbers currently that you are missing—if that is the way I can put it—in the residues assessment and in the pesticides assessment and to a lesser extent the environmental and health so that we can get an idea? Are we talking one or two or is it significantly more?

Ms Arthy: I will need a note handed to me for the pesticides, but for residues there are normally eight people in that team. I think we are currently sitting at four. So we have half strength. We are trying to recruit some people in. I think we have one or two people coming in over the next few months.

In the health area, I think we are understaffed by two people, which is two out of about 10—so, again, a fifth of the team. With environment, we should have a team of two or three but we have one person. I will just see if Mr Norden, who is the head of the pesticides area, has the number or whether we need to take that one on notice and come back.

Mr Norden: We can take that one on notice, other than to say that there are at least three of what we call portfolio directors—senior staff engaged in managing the administration and processing of applications. And then several—

Answer:

As at 15 February 2017:

- Residues Assessment team comprising ten permanent positions, eight of these are involved in assessments. There are four vacancies, all assessor positions.
- Pesticides Assessment team comprising 23 permanent positions, had eight vacancies. Three of the vacant positions were staffed by temporary, non-ongoing employees.
- Environment Assessment team comprising two permanent positions and had one vacancy.

Health Assessment team comprising 14 permanent positions had five vacancies. One of the vacant positions is staffed by a temporary, non-ongoing employee.

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates February 2017

Agriculture and Water Resources

Question Number: 10

Division/Agency: Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority

Topic: Staffing breakdown

Proof Hansard Page: 46

Senator CAROL BROWN asked:

Ms Arthy: I can also provide that, if you want it, by level. I have the SES, EL1 and EL2 breakdown, but we are managing this by job groupings. I can provide you with the statistics by job level if you wish.

Senator CAROL BROWN: Could you table it? Is it able to be tabled?

Answer:

The table below provides a breakdown of the number of staff that left the agency from 1 July 2016 to 15 February 2017 by APS level:

APS LEVEL	Ongoing	Non ongoing	Total
SES	1	1	2
EL2	11	-	11
EL1	7	1	8
APS 6	10	4	14
APS 5	4	3	7
APS 4	1	-	1
APS 3	1	4	5
TOTAL	35	13	48

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates February 2017

Agriculture and Water Resources

Question Number: 11

Division/Agency: Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority

Topic: Staffing as at 15 February

Proof Hansard Page: 47

Senator RICE asked:

Senator RICE: How many as of the February date that you have there?

Ms Arthy: As of 15 February, we had a head count of 92 regulatory scientists.

Senator RICE: That does not tally at all then with the 53.

Ms Arthy: I need to take that on notice, because of how it goes through. I suspect the numbers handed to me are what is in our establishment and not the physical number of people who are there. I will have to get some clarification of that.

Answer:

As at 15 February 2017 there were 79 regulatory scientists employed at the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA).

The APVMA provided a response to Parliamentary QoN 537 that outlined staff by functional area.

The figure of 53 referred to in the question from Senator Rice above, represents staff employed as at 1 July 2016 in the Registration Management and Evaluation program, working as or to support scientists.

Regulatory Scientists also work in other programs, in particular the Office of the Chief Scientist (OCS) and Scientific Assessment and Chemical Review (SA & CR).

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates February 2017

Agriculture and Water Resources

Question Number: 12

Division/Agency: Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority

Topic: Draft policies

Proof Hansard Page: 49

Senator CAROL BROWN asked:

Senator CAROL BROWN: Is it possible to get a list of those?

Ms Arthy: We can forward you the draft policies. I note that the draft policies are out for consultation. Consultation shuts today and then we will be going through a period of working with staff to finalise them. We are certainly happy to give you copies of the draft policy.

Answer:

Attached – Draft retention policy and Draft Armidale permanent relocation policy, dated December 2016.

DECEMBER 2016

MONTH YEAR



APVMA EMPLOYEE RETENTION POLICY

Draft for Consultation

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1. RETENTION POLICY

The APVMA recognises it employs a highly skilled and capable workforce, and is committed to providing all staff with support and assistance during the transition and relocation period. APVMA wishes to encourage the retention of this highly skilled workforce, and will offer a range of incentives to achieve this.

The policy provides information about the incentives being offered, as well as more general workplace support available to employees during the transition period.

1.1 Definitions

"CEO" means the Chief Executive Officer of APVMA.

"Ongoing employee" means an employee engaged on an ongoing basis under Section 22(2)(a) of the Public Service Act.

"Non-ongoing employee" means persons engaged for a specified term or for the duration of a specified task or to perform duties that are irregular or intermittent.

"Delegate" means the SES officer assigned with responsibility for approving an employee's final financial assistance package.

"this Policy" means *Retention Policy*.

1.2 Policy Approval

This Policy becomes effective once approved by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the APVMA.

The CEO is committed to ensuring that consultation on any proposed change to this Policy occurs through the Staff Consultative Committee.

1.3 Principles

The APVMA will offer monetary incentives in the form of retention bonuses. Alternatively, other incentives will be offered up to the value of the retention bonus (subject to APVMA discussion re treatment of any relevant tax obligations).

Workplace support and assistance services will not be assigned a monetary value.

1.4 Eligibility

An ongoing APVMA employee who elects to continue their employment with the organisation during the transition to Armidale, NSW may be covered by the various elements outlined in this Policy. Employees

who commence employment with the APVMA during the transition to Armidale will be covered by general principles of this policy with some areas being on a pro-rata basis.

Persons engaged for a specified term or for the duration of a specified task or to perform duties that are irregular or intermittent commonly referred to as non-ongoing employees are eligible for all parts of this Policy with the exception of Section 2.

2. RETENTION INCENTIVES

2.1 Retention bonuses

A retention bonus may be payable to eligible employees who continue their employment with the organisation during the transition to Armidale, as per the following table, or as determined by the delegate:

Retention bonus payment date	Bonus amount
December 2017	1.5 %
December 2018	3.0%
Close of APVMA Canberra office (or otherwise determined by CEO)	10.0%

Each instalment will be paid after the completion of the relevant period. All retention bonuses are a taxable one off payment, are not salary for superannuation purposes, and will not be included in any final entitlement calculation.

Employees that commence after January 2017 may receive a retention bonus reduced on a pro-rata basis.

Payment of retention bonuses will be subject to satisfactory performance, including meeting any knowledge management requirements relevant to the position the employee occupies.

2.2 Formal professional development

Employees may undertake formal professional development courses/programs, or attend major professional conferences, symposiums etc., where it is relevant to career development within the APVMA, or relevant to a career management plan (see section 3.1).

The cost of formal course fees, conference registration etc. will be met by the APVMA as an alternative to payment of a retention bonus, up to the value of the retention bonus.

2.3 Purchase of additional leave

Employees may use the value of their retention bonus to purchase additional leave.

3. WORKPLACE SUPPORT

In addition to retention incentives, APVMA will make various avenues of workplace support available to staff.

3.1 Career management

Career management assistance, including career counselling, coaching, professional development, job transition etc. will be provided on either a small group or individual basis.

Career management assistance will focus on helping employees to set career/employment goals for the transition period and into the relocation period, and to develop plans and strategies to pursue those goals.

3.2 Learning and development

As part of the outcome of a vocational assessment or through consultation with their manager, the Delegate may approve assistance with learning and professional development needs that have been identified and agreed. The focus of any training will be on personal development and enhancing the employee's redeployment prospects. Additional training may be provided subject to the approval of the CEO.

3.3 Redeployment

Ongoing employees who are not on probation and who have indicated that they wish to remain in Canberra will be eligible to place their name on the Australian Public Service (APS) wide redeployment register maintained by the Australian Public Service Commission (APSC). APVMA will provide assistance to excess employees in exploring redeployment options for within the wider APS. This assistance may include:

- Information and training;
- Income maintenance where eligible;
- consideration for staff to participate in approved work trials (including in the private sector);
- reasonable paid time off to attend interviews; and/or
- alternative redeployment mechanisms.

Consistent with the redeployment guidelines issued by the APSC, excess employees who are interested in being redeployed will need to actively participate in any redeployment activities to maximise their chances of possible redeployment.

In addition to liaising with the APSC and other Government agencies regarding possible redeployment options APVMA may also engage the service of a recruitment agency to assist with the redeployment process and in identifying redeployment options in the private sector.

3.4 Work placements

Employees that are subject to redeployment arrangements may participate in work placements or work trials with other APS agencies in order to gain on-the-job experience - placements can be useful in determining whether the employee concerned is suitable for the type of work to be undertaken.

APVMA will continue paying the employee's salary in such cases but the duration of any placement or trial would generally be expected to be 90 days or less unless a longer period has been approved by the CEO. Temporary work trials are used to demonstrate to a potential supervisor an employee's suitability (or otherwise) for a particular position or type of work.

Where an employee undertakes a temporary work trial they remain an employee of APVMA and will continue to be covered by the provisions of the Public Service Act, the APVMA Enterprise Agreement and relevant APVMA/APS policies. Employees must not accept any form of remuneration from the job trial provider.

Consistent with current practices staff seeking alternative employment in Canberra will be provided with time off from work to attend interviews.

3.5 Other support

APVMA will also make available:

- Personal development seminars on a variety of topics aimed at supporting employee resilience through a period of significant change
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP) – ongoing support will be available through APVMA's EAP providers, OPTUM
- Vocational assessment and reassignment plans, to assist employees to identify personal and/or professional development needs as a basis for any future redeployment
- Financial advice.

4. RELATED POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

- Draft Relocation policy
- Remote working policy (tbd)
- HR policies, including purchased leave
- Performance management policy, including knowledge transfer responsibilities (tbd)
- Career management services

DECEMBER 2016

MONTH YEAR



ARMIDALE PERMANENT RELOCATION POLICY

Draft for Consultation

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1. ARMIDALE PERMANENT RELOCATION POLICY

This Policy provides information about relocation assistance available to eligible employees permanently relocating to Armidale, NSW, following the Australian Government's announcement on 25 November 2016 that the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) will relocate to Armidale. It is expected that the APVMA will commence its operations in Armidale from early to mid-2019.

This Policy does not form part of the APVMA Enterprise Agreement (current or future) and reflects the extent of incentives, allowances and reimbursement available under this Policy and claims arising from other policies or provisions will not be considered. It remains separate to the APVMA Relocation Assistance Policy (January 2011).

1.1 Definitions

"CEO" means the Chief Executive Officer of APVMA.

"Ongoing employee" means an employee engaged on an ongoing basis under Section 22(2)(a) of the Public Service Act.

"Non-ongoing employee" means persons engaged for a specified term or for the duration of a specified task or to perform duties that are irregular or intermittent.

"Dependant" in relation to an employee means:

- A partner of the employee (married or defacto including same sex partner); or
- Child being under the age of 18 who is studying full time at school, college or university and includes foster child, step child, adopted child or ward;
- Parent of the employee who ordinarily resides with the employee and who is wholly or substantially dependent on the employee.

A "defacto" or "partner" is a person who, although not legally married to the employee, lives with the employee in a relationship as a couple on a genuine domestic basis.

"Delegate" means the SES officer assigned with responsibility for approving an employee's final relocation financial assistance package.

"this Policy" means *Armidale Permanent Relocation Policy*.

1.2 Policy Approval

This Policy becomes effective once approved by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the APVMA.

The CEO is committed to ensuring that consultation on any proposed change to this Policy occurs through the Staff Consultative Committee.

1.3 Purpose

The underlying purpose of this Policy is to provide details of potential elements which could be considered when determining fair and reasonable permanent relocation expenses and to describe the incentives available to employees who choose to relocate. It is not the purpose of this Policy to guarantee or mirror an employee's current living or lifestyle circumstances upon relocation to Armidale.

1.4 Eligibility

An ongoing APVMA employee who relocates to Armidale, NSW will be eligible for consideration of permanent relocation costs under this Policy.

In the circumstance where an eligible employee and their dependant/s work for the APVMA and have been deemed eligible for assistance under this Policy, the entitlement will be given to the household. One employee should nominate to represent that household and seek approval for relocation assistance.

Entitlements for employees who are required to relocate to Armidale on a non-ongoing basis (or who are engaged directly to the APVMA in Armidale on a non-ongoing basis) will be negotiated with individual employees, based on the general purpose of this Policy and taking into consideration the individual personal circumstances and the length of the non-ongoing engagement.

1.5 Permanent Relocation Agreement

Permanent relocation assistance should be discussed and negotiated between the employee, the relevant Executive Director and the APVMA delegate prior to the employee formally agreeing to relocate. Once the composition of the relocation assistance package has been agreed by all parties, a *Permanent Relocation Agreement* is to be signed by the employee and the APVMA delegate. The agreement is at Attachment A.

1.6 Receipts

Employees are required to maintain all records and receipts associated with the costs of the permanent relocation and the approved assistance package for a period of up to six (6) months following permanent relocation. Examples of receipts that may be required to be produced to the delegate in support of claims include but are not limited to, uplift records, utility connection/disconnection statements, and storage invoices. Records for items purchased with allowances such as meal and disturbance allowances are not required by this Policy to be kept.

1.7 Permanent Relocation Approval

The approval of permanent relocation expenditure is made subject to the obligations under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*. Where there is a need determine what is considered reasonable this will be a decision of the APVMA delegate (being the nominated SES Band 1 officer or higher), in consultation with the CEO as necessary. The CEO and APVMA Delegate must, for the purposes of approving expenditure of an employee's permanent relocation costs, be satisfied that the expenditure is efficient, effective, economical and an ethical use of public money.

Permanent relocations for non-SES employees will be approved by the APVMA Delegate. The CEO or APVMA Delegate may approve the reimbursement of costs associated with an employee's permanent relocation, and/or payment of additional allowances not specified in this Policy, having regard to the employee's individual circumstances.

Once the composition of the relocation assistance package has been agreed by all parties, a *Permanent Relocation Agreement* is to be signed by the employee and the APVMA delegate.

1.8 Abandonment of Relocation and Cost Recovery

If an employee abandons their relocation (for example, where the employee does not commence duties in the Armidale office on the agreed commencement date), the employee may be required to repay up to 100% of the relocation costs paid by the APVMA (including allowances and amounts reimbursed under this Policy). The delegate will determine the final amount to be repaid having regard to the costs incurred and the employee's personal circumstances. The amount to be repaid can be deducted from any final monies payable to the employee, or recovered as a debt due to the Commonwealth.

1.9 Cessation of Employment

Permanent relocation assistance payments will cease to be paid if the employee leaves the APVMA.

If the employee ceases employment with the APVMA within 24 months of the permanent relocation, the employee may be required to repay a pro-rata proportion of the relocation costs paid. The amount to be repaid can be deducted from any final monies payable to the employee, or recovered as a debt due to the Commonwealth.

The repayment rate will be dependent on the employment status of the employee as described below:

Ongoing Employees

- Where an ongoing employee ceases employment with APVMA within two years of their permanent relocation, the amount of the relocation assistance to be repaid will be the amount of the combined allocations paid, less one twenty fourth (1/24) of the amount for each completed calendar month of service, elapsing after commencement in the new location and before termination of service.

Non-Ongoing Employees

- Where a non-ongoing employee ceases employment with APVMA prior to the stipulated expiry date in the employee's employment contract, the amount of the relocation assistance to be repaid will be the amount of the combined allocations paid, less a proportion calculated on the basis of completed calendar months of service, to the number of total calendar months of the non-ongoing contract.

The CEO has discretion to waive repayment obligations in certain circumstances, such as where the employee is required to resign on medical grounds. Supporting evidence may be required in consideration of any request.

2. TRAVEL TO ARMIDALE

The APVMA may meet the following reasonable travel costs associated with permanent relocation to Armidale. Where it is not possible to directly meet the costs, the delegate may approve the reimbursement of reasonable expenses to the employee which may include an allowance for meals. Flights and accommodation is to be booked through the APVMA.

2.1 Pre-transfer visit

The purpose of this visit is for the employee and dependants to familiarise themselves with the Armidale region and arrange accommodation and/or schooling.

Under this provision, employees will be entitled to one (1) visit to Armidale, for a period not exceeding 4 calendar day's duration, taken as miscellaneous leave, and subject to operational requirements. The APVMA will meet the reasonable costs of airfares for the employee and any dependents (or pay motor vehicle allowance if travelling by car); accommodation; taxi transfers; and/or car hire in Armidale.

Approval for pre-transfer visits will be granted to employees who have demonstrated a commitment to relocating to Armidale. Employees who undertake a pre-transfer visit and then do not relocate, may be required to pay all or part of the travel costs incurred by the APVMA as part of this visit.

2.2 Cost of Transport to Armidale

The APVMA will meet the reasonable costs for an employee and their dependents who permanently relocate, to travel to Armidale.

2.3 Accommodation costs – pre-transfer location (Canberra)

The APVMA will meet the reasonable costs of accommodation for up to 7 days (one week) in Canberra where the employee is required to vacate their home or have furniture removed.

2.4 Accommodation costs – Armidale

The APVMA will meet the reasonable costs of accommodation for up to three weeks in Armidale if long term temporary or permanent accommodation is not immediately available.

3. REMOVAL AND STORAGE OF HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE AND GOODS

The APVMA will meet reasonable removal and/or storage costs of household furniture and goods from the pre-location to Armidale, which belong to an employee and their dependants.

3.1 Removal and Storage Costs

As a guide, the following items are included as household furniture and goods which will be subject to reasonable costs of removal:

- A households normal contents; and
- Outdoor items such as play equipment, garden tools, portable barbeques and small garden shed
- Reasonable cost of relocating of pets (excluding horses and other livestock) which includes temporary kennelling and transportation

The following are not included as household furniture and goods:

- Large outdoor structures, such as garages, carports and entertaining areas
- Motor vehicles and motor cycles (see 3.3 below)
- Large outdoor equipment such as farm equipment and machinery

An employee may have all or some of their household furniture and goods stored at the APVMA's expense for a reasonable period. Payment of storage costs would not normally continue beyond the date on which suitable housing becomes available in Armidale or the employee ceases employment with the APVMA.

Employees may:

- Request the APVMA to organise the removal and/or storage of their household furniture if the APVMA Delegate has agreed to pay the full cost; or
- Arrange the removal and/or storage of their household furniture themselves and then make a claim for reimbursement if the APVMA Delegate has agreed to reimburse part of the cost only.

Note: if an employee elects to arrange their own removal, they must provide at least three quotes (which should also include insurance costs) when claiming reimbursement from the APVMA (one of which is the APVMA's provider). The quote that represents the best value for money (normally the lowest price) will be the one approved for reimbursement. Information on furniture removals arranged by the APVMA through its contractor can be provided by the Transition Team.

3.2 Insurance

If removal and/or storage of household furniture and effects is at the APVMA's expense, and carried out by the APVMA in conjunction with its contractor, automatic indemnity to the value of the inventory is provided. Employees should check the insurance details of their removal and/or storage arrangements to ensure full coverage.

Employees may take out additional insurance on top of the normal cover provided for removals and/or storage organised by the APVMA. The cost of additional insurance is the responsibility of employees.

Insurance for privately arranged removals and/or storage is the responsibility of the employee. Employees are responsible for any lost or damaged sustained where they organise the removal and / or storage. Costs for insurance should be incorporated in any quote that is provided to the APVMA for assessment.

3.3 Freighting motor vehicles/cycles

It is anticipated that employees will drive their vehicle to the transfer location. An employee who travels by private motor vehicle owned or hired by the employee may be paid Motor Vehicle Allowance (MVA) for travel by the most direct available route. Rates per kilometre will be paid in accordance with the approved ATO rates in operation at the time this Policy is in effect.

If it is considered impractical for an employee to drive their motor vehicles/cycle, the APVMA may approve the employee's reasonable costs of transferring to Armidale and pay the reasonable costs of freighting up to two motor vehicles/cycles. In determining the impracticality of an employee driving their motor vehicles/cycle, the APVMA delegate may consider such things as the wellbeing of the driver, family considerations, the length of the proposed journey, the state of the roads.

Freight of motor vehicles/cycles should be organised through the APVMA's provider. Employees may arrange the freight of motor vehicles/motor cycles themselves. Employees may then make a claim for reimbursement provided that the delegate has approved the freight. In assessing the amount to be reimbursed, the delegate will consider the cost of freight had the APVMA organised it.

Note: if an employee elects to arrange their own freight of motor vehicles/motor cycles, they must provide at least three quotes when claiming reimbursement from the APVMA (one of which is the APVMA's provider). The quote that represents the best value for money (normally the lowest price) will be the one approved for reimbursement. Information on freight of motor vehicles/motor cycles arranged by the APVMA through their contractor can be provided by the Transition Team. Costs for insurance should be incorporated in any quote that is provided to the APVMA for assessment.

4. MISCELLANEOUS ASSISTANCE

The APVMA will provide the following assistance to employees permanently relocating under the Policy. Where it is not possible to directly meet the costs, the APVMA delegate may approve the reimbursement of reasonable expenses to the employee.

4.1 Household Establishment Allowances

Household establishment allocation is a taxable one-off payment that recognises the additional costs that employees incur to restock their household with basic pantry items and cleaning goods that cannot be transported to their new location.

Household Establishment Allowance	Rate from (date of Armidale office opening) 2019
Rate	\$2000

4.2 Disturbance Allowance

Disturbance allowance is a taxable one-off payment to cover a range of costs on permanent relocation which are not covered by reimbursement of other transfer costs.

Disturbance Allowance	Without Dependants	With at least one dependant	Employees with at least one dependant
Rate	\$600	\$1200	plus \$250 in respect of each child who is a fulltime student

4.3 Utility Connection and Registration Fees

The APVMA will meet reasonable costs associated with the employee's utility disconnection costs in the pre-transfer location and connection costs in Armidale, changes to vehicle registration and personal driver's licences. Examples of utility and registration costs may include (not an exhaustive list) such costs as:

- car registration for the employee and dependants (including vehicle inspection, excluding any repairs)
- driver's licence transfer fees for employee and dependants
- telephone/broadband internet connection fees, including penalties for early contract termination
- electricity and gas connection fees.

4.4 Other Costs

The CEO or APVMA Delegate may, having regard to any submissions made by the employee and the employee's personal circumstances, approve the reimbursement of costs associated with an employee's permanent relocation, and/or payment of additional allowances not specified in this Policy.

5 RETURN TRAVEL – FIRST 12 MONTHS

Employees who permanently relocate to Armidale under this Policy will be eligible for up to 12 return airfares to Canberra in the first twelve months of relocation, for the purposes of reuniting with family and/or friends.

This amount will be based on a specific dollar value of 12 return economy fares and will operate as an annual cap. Flights to the value of the annual cap can be organised by the employee for themselves and their dependants if they elect to use the allowance in that manner.

Return travel for this purpose is not travel on official business. An employee may, subject to the prior approval of their manager and having regard to operational requirements, apply for recreation leave or flex leave during a return travel visit.

Any unused travel entitlements cannot be cashed out. It lapses on separation and may not be carried over beyond the first year.

6 SALARY LOADING

Employees who permanently relocate to Armidale under this Policy will be eligible for an overall 15% salary loading on top of their regular annual salary which will be paid over the first three years of permanently relocating.

The loading will be calculated on the employees regular annual salary and be payable fortnightly over the first three years. Payment of a salary loading will count as income for superannuation purposes and be subject to the employee's ongoing satisfactory performance.

By way of example the table below shows the calculations of the Salary Loading based on an annual salary of \$100,000.

Example – Application of salary loading principles following permanent relocation to Armidale	
Salary Loading	Example salary amount based on salary of \$100,000
1 st Year 5%	\$105,000
2 nd Year 5%	\$110,250
3 rd Year 5%	\$115,762

As part of permanently relocating to Armidale, employees are eligible for an overall 15% salary loading, payable over three years.

This means an employee with a regular salary of \$100,000 will be eligible for a \$5,000 loading in the first year (being 5% in first year), bringing their base salary for superannuation purposes to \$105,000.

In the second year, the employee receives an additional 5% salary loading on top of the \$105,000, bringing their second year salary up to \$110,250.

In the third year, the employee receives an additional 5% salary loading on top of the \$110,250, bringing their third year salary up to \$115,762.

7 EFFECTS ON EMPLOYEE TAX AND SUPERANNUATION

7.1 Tax

Payments in association with an employee's relocation may raise a reportable fringe benefit amount. This will be reported on the employee's payment summary.

7.2 Superannuation

Unless otherwise expressly stated, relocation payments are not salary for superannuation purposes and will not be included in any final entitlement calculations.

8 ATTACHMENTS

8.1 Permanent Relocation Agreement

The Permanent Relocation Agreement, Appendix A attached, is mandatory for all employees who permanently relocate to Armidale.

Permanent Relocation Agreement

Employee Name		Employee AGS	
Employee Phone Number		Date of Commencement at Armidale	
Email Address		Cost Centre	

- Below are relocation costs and allowances that may be approved in accordance with the Armidale Permanent Relocation Policy (the Policy).
- Delegates should “check” the relevant box (click on the box) for each expense they approve and enter the value limit, where appropriate, for the following relocation costs.
- Nothing in this Relocation Agreement gives the employee a right to abandon their relocation without the prior agreement of the APVMA.

*Please send the original signed form to: relocationapprovals@apvma.gov.au

Relocation	Yes	No	Value Limit
Allowances			
1. Household Establishment Allowance (check the Policy for current rate)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A – Select Y or N
2. Disturbance Allowance (check the Policy for current rates)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A – Select Y or N
Other costs			
3. Accommodation (at Pre-transfer Location) No. of nights	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$
4. Accommodation (at Armidale) No. of nights	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$
5. Household Furniture and Goods Removal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$
6. Storage of Household Furniture and Goods (at Armidale) No. of weeks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$
7. Vehicle/s Removal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$
Reimbursements			
8. Rent or Boarding Payments at Armidale (refer to 3.4 of the Policy) No. of weeks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$
Pre-Transfer Visit			
10. Airfares (including taxi reimbursement/airport transfers)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$
11. Accommodation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$
12. Car Hire	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$
Transport to Transfer Location			
13. Airfares (including taxi reimbursement/airport transfers & excess baggage where reasonable)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$
14. Private Motor Vehicle (<i>comprehensive car insurance/registration/licence MUST be provided</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$
15. Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$
Total estimated cost	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$



I undertake to advise the Delegate by email: relocationapproval@apvma.gov.au immediately of any change to the details of my personal circumstances that may relate to my relocation.

- abandon the relocation (in which case clause 1.7 of the Policy applies), or
- cease employment within the APVMA within 24 months of the permanent relocation (in which case clause 1.8 of the Policy applies).

I agree that where I am liable to repay relocation costs, the amounts payable may be deducted from monies otherwise payable to me, or recovered as a debt due to the Commonwealth.

Employee's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Spending Approver Statement

(Non-SES relocation requires Delegate approval. SES relocation requires CEO approval.)

I confirm that I am a Delegate as defined under 1.1 of the Policy. I also confirm that I hold appropriate delegation or authorisation and approve this expenditure under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*. For the purpose of approving expenditure associated with the relocation of an employee, I approve expenditure to a maximum of \$ and am satisfied that the expenditure is an efficient, effective, economical and ethical use of public money. Expenditure for individual items will be limited to the value limit specified above, where applicable.

Approver's Signature: _____ Date: _____

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Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates February 2017

Agriculture and Water Resources

Question Number: 13

Division/Agency: Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority

Topic: Government sign off

Proof Hansard Page: 49

Senator CAROL BROWN asked:

Senator CAROL BROWN: With all of these inducements or whatever you call them and the offer to work remotely, is that just something that you do as the CEO or does it have to be ticked off by the department?

Ms Arthy: It is my responsibility in terms of the day-to-day management and operation of the agency. The issue around doing the remote working is that it relies on our IT systems being completely rebuilt. It is that element where I need to get the signoff from government to be able to get the money to just redo our IT systems. That element needs to be signed off by government.

Senator CAROL BROWN: So, it goes to the department and is it signed off by the minister?

Ms Arthy: I believe it is to be signed off between the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister for Finance, but I may have to check with the department about the actual decision. I am pretty sure that is right.

Answer:

The Chief Executive Officer has, as part of her responsibilities for the day-to-day management and operation of the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA), the authority to approve policies relating to employee conditions.

The APVMA has received funding to develop a fully costed digital strategy, with final costs to be agreed with the Minister for Finance.

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates February 2017

Agriculture and Water Resources

Question Number: 14

Division/Agency: Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority

Topic: Policy Order

Proof Hansard Page: 58

Senator CAROL BROWN asked:

Senator CAROL BROWN: Was any of it taken on board?

Ms Arthy: I would have to get some advice about how to answer that, because it was part of a cabinet process. I am not meaning to be obscure.

Senator CAROL BROWN: No, I understand.

Ms Arthy: It is just that it is part of a lot of work that was happening at that time around the issuing of that policy order. If you want a more direct answer, I may have to take that offline and come back.

Senator CAROL BROWN: Yes, I am happy for that to happen. In your response to that draft, did you recommend any changes?

Answer:

Correspondence between the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources and the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority Chief Executive Officer on the proposed Government Policy Order, has been provided as an attachment in the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources' submission to the inquiry into *The operation, effectiveness, and consequences of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (Location of Corporate Commonwealth Entities) Order 2016*.

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates February 2017

Agriculture and Water Resources

Question Number: 15

Division/Agency: Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority

Topic: Seftons

Proof Hansard Page: 59-60

Senator CAROL BROWN asked:

Senator CAROL BROWN: How much are they being paid?

Ms Arthy: We will have to take that one on notice. I am sorry, I just do not have that in front of me.

Senator CAROL BROWN: Is that out of the \$25.6 million?

Ms Arthy: Yes, it is.

Senator CAROL BROWN: How long is their contract for?

Ms Arthy: I am sorry, I just do not have that level of detail in front of me. I think we have got it for another couple of months just to get us through the initial phase of the relocation. But in terms of the exact date, we can certainly come back to you on notice.

Senator CAROL BROWN: You list some of the roles that they would be undertaking. Can we get a list of exactly the roles that Seftons will be performing?

Ms Arthy: Certainly. We can provide that to you, yes.

Senator CAROL BROWN: And on notice you will give me the cost?

Answer:

Seftons and Associates Pty Ltd are contracted for the period 1 October 2016 to 30 June 2017. The value of the contract is up to an amount of \$100,000, (excluding GST). To 28 February 2017 we have paid \$57,503 against this contract.

Seftons was engaged to provide strategic communication and stakeholder engagement advice in the lead up to the relocation announcement and the initial transition phase.

Question Number: 15 (continued)

This work includes advice on communicating the ongoing role of the regulator during the increased focus on relocation; maintenance of confidence and trust in the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) by staff, stakeholders and government; developing messaging to encourage staff to stay at the APVMA and ways to ensure engagement of staff and stakeholders in the various aspects of the relocation.

Seftons will also assist with an Armidale campaign for staff and their families to get to know Armidale and for the Armidale community to get to know the APVMA.

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates February 2017

Agriculture and Water Resources

Question Number: 16

Division/Agency: Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority

Topic: Staffing numbers

Proof Hansard Page: 62-63

Senator RICE asked:

Senator RICE: Absolutely. In terms of the numbers, as you said, it may be up to 25 per cent that will go, but you are already losing staff. I am completely confused with the numbers, because the numbers that you are saying, 100 regulatory scientists, are very different to the numbers that were given to me on the question on notice.

Ms Arthy: Yes. This is where we will have to do some reconciliation between the numbers that I am talking about today and your question on notice, which we are happy to do for you. Things change so much. We bring people in and out all of the time.

Answer:

See response to question on notice 11 from Additional Estimates, February 2017.

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates February 2017

Agriculture and Water Resources

Question Number: 17

Division/Agency: Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority

Topic: Regulatory scientist salary

Proof Hansard Page: 65

Senator RICE asked:

Senator RICE: As to your incentives that you were talking about before, 15 per cent of the salary, what is the average salary of a regulatory scientist?

Ms Arthy: I will have to take that one on notice. I am sorry, I just do not know.

Answer:

The average salary of a Regulatory Scientist at the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority is \$104,547.

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates February 2017

Agriculture and Water Resources

Question Number: 18

Division/Agency: Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority

Topic: Seftons proposal

Proof Hansard Page: 68

Senator STERLE asked:

Senator STERLE: Can you table the Seftons proposal?

Ms Arthy: Yes. We will have to look at what commercial-in-confidences there are, but we will certainly table what we can.

Senator STERLE: So, this is a really big maybe. We would not have a clue or do we have some indicative cost around all of those issues that I just mentioned to you, bearing in mind you do not even know how many staff?

Ms Arthy: It is incredibly indicative.

Senator STERLE: Can you table that for us?

Ms Arthy: We can provide it on notice.

Senator STERLE: Yes. Is it easier to table it now or is there an issue?

Ms Arthy: No. There is stuff on here; I would have to check it back.

Senator STERLE: Do you want me to run my eye over it, firstly?

Ms Arthy: No, it is okay. We will take it on notice.

Answer:

Refer to response question on notice 15 from Additional Estimates, February 2017.

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates February 2017

Agriculture and Water Resources

Question Number: 19

Division/Agency: Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority

Topic: - Staffing

Proof Hansard Page: written

Senator GRIFF asked:

1. 1. Following the July 2015 survey which looked at staff willingness to move to Armidale and/or Toowoomba, has the APVMA since conducted an additional survey of staff regarding willingness to move only to Armidale?
 - a. If so, what were the results by category?
 - b. If not, why not?
2. Has market testing been conducted by the APVMA on Armidale's ability to supply a work force?
 - a. If so, what were the results?
 - b. If not, why not?
3. At what stage is the redundancy process?
 - a. Please provide the percentage and total number of staff who have indicated they will accept a redundancy
 - b. Please provide a breakdown of how many staff have accepted a redundancy and departed, how many have indicated they will accept a redundancy but are still working at APVMA, and what areas they are in.
 - c. What is the total cost of the redundancy program?
4. Please provide a breakdown of the vacant positions across APVMA by area – existing and expected due to redundancy – and advise which of these you are so far unable to fill.
 - a. What impact will it have on your operations – and the ag-vet sector - if these positions remain empty?
5. Given the current understaffing, will APVMA be able to sustain its rate of effort for registration of new agricultural and veterinary chemical products, particularly during and following relocation?
6. APVMA has indicated it will employ remote working to overcome difficulties hiring/relocating qualified staff to Armidale. Will there be any compromise to speed or process as a result?
 - A. What impact will there be to APVMA's operations and its approvals/assessments processes if APVMA is unable to secure the required number of regulatory scientists through remote working arrangements?

Question Number: 19 (continued)

7. The following ABC article, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-12-09/apvma-highlights-staff-shortages-barnaby-joyce-move-armidale/8107168> referred to grain growers accessing an emergency permit through APVMA to tackle a mouse plague that was ruining grain crops across NSW. The permit allowed farmers to set up mixing stations and to buy zinc phosphide to treat grain, rather than going through distribution networks. In this case, it appears APVMA's power to quickly approve the purchase of the chemical was paramount.
- How will the APVMA ensure it can maintain its response times to these types of situations during and following the relocation?

Answer:

1. No

a. N/A

A staff survey was conducted by Ernst & Young as input to the cost benefit and risk analysis in early 2016, negating the need for the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) to conduct its own survey.

2. No

a. N/A

b. N/A

c. N/A

3. There is no redundancy process at present.

a. N/A

b. N/A

c. N/A

4. Vacancies as at 28 March 2017.

Office of the CEO	White Paper Reform	Corporate/Relocation Team	Legal & Compliance	Registration Management & Evaluation	Scientific Assessment & Chemical Review	Chief Scientist	APVMA Totals
0	0	5	6	15	13	0	39

- These figures are for substantive vacancies. A number of these vacant positions are currently filled by staff who are non-ongoing or on temporary transfer.
- There are no vacancies due to redundancy. At this time, no vacancies have been identified as being unable to be filled. Relevant activities are underway to fill ongoing vacant positions.

Question Number: 19 (continued)

5. The APVMA is actively recruiting scientific staff since the announcement of the relocation. The disruption through relocation is impacting on staffing however despite this overall timeframe performance increased from 77 per cent in the September 2016 quarter to 78 per cent in the December 2016 quarter. There has been a decline in performance in the pesticides area but it's still marginally better than the December quarter from the previous year. Best endeavours will be made to meet legislative timeframes and, as staff leaving are replaced by new recruits they will be trained and deployed to manage any backlog.
6. The APMVA is currently working on the operational details for remote working. It is being developed as a potential option to retain specialist skills to enable the APVMA meet legislative timeframes.
 - a. The APVMA is pursuing a range of options to access specialist expertise and to maximise the efficiency of its operations in order to meet legislative timeframes.
7.
 - a. The APVMA prioritises work relating to biosecurity emergencies and has a range of mechanisms in place to access necessary expertise to ensure fast turnaround.

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates

Agriculture and Water Resources

Question Number: 20

Division/Agency: Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority

Topic: APVMA relocation

Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator STERLE asked:

1. Has the APVMA had discussions with University of New England about courses that they have identified as a priority to assist with the relocation of the APVMA?
2. How does the relocation of the APVMA impact on the cost recovery arrangements currently in place at the APVMA?
3. Will the cost of the IT strategy be a cost to industry?
4. Will the cost of the new building be a cost to industry?
5. Was the cost of the IT strategy included in the cabinet submission?
6. Will industry incur any further costs related to the relocation above the operation as usual costs?

Answer:

1. Yes. Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) staff have held discussions with the University of New England (UNE) regarding the establishment of coursework that aims to provide prospective and early career regulatory scientists with pre-employment and early career training. The APVMA has also held preliminary discussions with the UNE about developing an accelerated training program for new regulatory scientists when they start with the agency.
2. The APVMA has received \$25.6 million over six years to fund its relocation to Armidale. This remains separate to current business operating costs which are funded through cost recovery arrangements.
3. No.
4. No.
5. No. The APVMA is preparing a digital strategy proposal for the government's further consideration.

Question Number: 20 (continued)

6. No. The APVMA's relocation funding remains separate to the general operating budget. The APVMA will return to normal cost-recovery arrangements post 2021–22.