

## **Question on notice no. 5**

**Portfolio question number: SQ22-000051**

### **2021-22 Additional estimates**

#### **Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee, Agriculture, Water and Environment Portfolio**

**Senator Peter Whish-Wilson:** asked the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation on 15 February 2022—

Senator WHISH-WILSON: Can you tell me what kind of community engagement or communications you've had on these projects?

Dr Hone: Good question.

Senator WHISH-WILSON: I'm getting a lot of complaints from people saying they have been shut out.

Dr Hone: There is a steering committee that has people like the Derwent group on it as local users of that area. We did hold a community seminar as a public forum last year in Hobart, and there's another one planned for April this year to engage with the community and talk through all the science. There's a web portal with all the current information on it. You can access it through either our site, the IMAS site or the CSIRO site—we all share common links to that information.

Senator WHISH-WILSON: So the public can access it?

Dr Hone: Yes. There will be a new portal up very soon—that's the decision support tool, which people can use to explore different parts of the model. All the reports that we do which are relevant for the department and the EPA get lodged on the department's portal site as well.

Senator WHISH-WILSON: Have you got copies of correspondence from the community requesting regular and transparent updates?

Mr Williams: That hasn't come to me, no.

Senator WHISH-WILSON: Where would that have gone to?

Mr Williams: The only thing I've ever had is from Peter, from the action group. He wanted some information out of the aquaculture inquiry about what we're doing with land based work. He was just trying to understand where we were going with that. That is the only community group in Tasmania that has contacted us.

Senator WHISH-WILSON: I was told by the community that the only report that could be downloaded from your website is a review summary of the monitoring design.

Dr Hone: I'll have to take that on notice.

Senator WHISH-WILSON: It's dated July 2020. That sat with FRDC for nine months before being published. Is there a reason for that?

Dr Hone: All of the reports from Jeff Ross get lodged on the EPA site, which is the baseline monitoring work. They're all there, and I think they're all up to date as of Christmas. That report would have been an interim report of the last work. With a lot of our work we don't actually publish it until it gets peer reviewed, and given the complexities of the science that we're dealing with, and trying to find independent reviewers who are not connected to CSIRO or IMAS, we often have to go overseas to

get these things reviewed. In the case of that project, it would have taken us some time to get an external review, especially during COVID.

Senator WHISH-WILSON: That's reasonable. I was also told that there were no reports on modelling research, and a reference to milestone reports has now been removed from your website. Are you aware of that?

Dr Hone: I'm not aware of that. I'd need more detail. We don't change that information.

**Answer —**

Answer attached.

**Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport**  
Answers to questions on notice  
**Agriculture, Water and the Environment Portfolio**

**Question No:** SQ22-000051  
**Hearing:** Additional Estimates  
**Outcome:** Agency  
**Division/Agency:** Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC)  
**Topic:** Research projects web portal  
**Question Date:** 18 February 2022  
**Question Type:** Spoken

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**Answer:**

**Project information on FRDC website**

After the migration to the new FRDC website, there was an undiscovered bug where not all of the projects with particular key words were displaying on certain pages. This was the case with the Storm Bay projects, where only some of the projects were surfacing on our website.

We have manually fixed this issue and have investigated to see if any other projects were affected. We thank the Senator for bringing this bug to our attention.