

Rural Affairs and Transport Committee

The Committee met on Wednesday 20 October 2010, from 9.00 am until 11.00 pm.

The Committee called the:

- Department and agencies of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry portfolio, including the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics – Bureau of Rural Sciences, Australian Fisheries Management Authority, Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority, Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation, Meat and Livestock Australia, Australian Wine and Brandy Corporation, Australian Wool Innovation and Grains Research and Development Corporation.

Among other issues, the main issues discussed were matters relating to:

- Timing of the return of answers to Questions on Notice
- Murray-Darling Basin Authority's *Guide to the Proposed Basin Plan*:
 - Departmental input
 - Modelling work undertaken by the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics
 - Impact on the meat, dairy and wool industries
- Finalisation of the Structural Adjustment Package by the Australian Fisheries Management Authority
- Increases in fees for fishing licenses in the Coral Sea
- Cessation of sheep meat trade with India and animal welfare and handling issues in respect of the live export trade of sheep (to the Middle East) and cattle (to Indonesia)
- Appeal to the World Trade Organisation in respect of its decision regarding the importation of New Zealand apples into Australia
- Proposed response in the event of a citrus canker outbreak and cost sharing arrangements
- Quality and integrity of exported Australian wine
- Progress towards industry agreement for a response in the event of an equine influenza outbreak and cost sharing arrangements
- Response by the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation and the Grains Research and Development Corporation to the Productivity Commission's draft report on Rural Research and Development Corporations