

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2016 – 2017, 19 October 2016

Ref No: SQ16-000566

OUTCOME: 2 – Health Access and Support Services

Topic: Imported Foods

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Rice, Janet

Question:

Online retail sales are the fastest growing area of retail trade.

- a) What steps has FSANZ taken to monitor this trade in relation to food safety and compliance with the Food Standards Code?
- b) Is FSANZ aware that online purchases are often resold in retail stores?
- c) What is FSANZ's position on the import of foods into Australia containing ingredients prohibited in Australia by individual consumers?
- d) Is there a process in place that will see these products declared or prohibited?

Answer:

- a) The state and territory governments develop and administer food legislation, which gives legal force to the requirements of the *Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code* (the Code). Along with the state and territory governments, local governments are responsible for monitoring the compliance of food that is sold in their jurisdiction.
- b) Monitoring food at retail is the responsibility of state and territory governments under relevant legislation.
- c) The Department of Agriculture and Water Resources has responsibility for the management of foods imported into Australia. Imported food is regulated at the border under the *Imported Food Control Act 1992* (the Act). That Act requires imported food to comply with Australian food standards and meet requirements for public health and safety. Food imported for private consumption is exempt from the Act and is not subject to regulation by the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources.

- d) The Act regulates commercial imports of food. Where a commercial consignment contains restricted or prohibited plants and fungi (as defined by Standard 1.4.4 in the Code), action, such as placing the consignment on hold and requiring the food to be destroyed or exported, with subsequent imports of that food inspected for compliance, may be taken. The Department of Agriculture and Water Resources publishes lists of foods that fail border inspections on the Department's website.