

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee
Answers to questions on notice
Environment portfolio

Question No: 377
Hearing: Supplementary Budget Estimates
Outcome: Agency
Programme: Director of National Parks
Topic: CHRISTMAS ISLAND BIOLOGICAL CONTROL - WASP
Hansard Page: N/A
Question Date: 29 October 2014
Question Type: Written

Senator Singh asked:

Has this Government maintained funding for the approval process?

- a. When does the funding run out?
- b. Will additional funding be required to implement the biological control?
- c. How long does the Department expect the biological control implementation process to take?
- d. What are its chances of success?

Answer:

Approval of the proposal to import the proposed control agent is the responsibility of the Department of Agriculture which undertakes assessment of proposals for the introduction of exotic biological control agents in accordance with established guidelines which are publicly available.

- a. & b. The current phase of funding for the crazy ant control program will finish at the end of the 2014-15 financial year. The budget for the next phase of the project is currently being scoped and finalised. Funding for the project will be a priority for the Director of National Parks.
- c. The assessment by the Department of Agriculture has no specific time limits. If approval to import is granted, release of the proposed control agent and monitoring of its effectiveness would be expected to commence in 2015.
- d. The results of the research undertaken by La Trobe University suggest that the prospects for success are good but effective control would be subject to a range of factors including the rate at which the micro-wasps can be reared and released; how quickly they establish and disperse; and the continuation of resources to monitor their impact.