

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

**Question No:** 158  
**Hearing:** Supplementary Budget Estimates  
**Outcome:** Agency  
**Programme:** Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA)  
**Topic:** Crown-of-Thorns Starfish - Eradication Program  
**Hansard Page:** 40  
**Question Date:** 19 October 2015  
**Question Type:** Spoken

**Senator Urquhart asked:**

**Senator URQUHART:** I want to get back to the crown-of-thorns starfish. How many crown-of-thorns starfish were destroyed last financial year?

**Dr Reichelt:** I can get you the figure in one second. I understand it is about 360,000.

**Ms M Johnson:** But that would be over a period of—

**Dr Reichelt:** Over the last 18 months.

**Senator URQUHART:** I am talking about the last financial year. Do you have that broken down?

**Ms M Johnson:** I do not think that I have it broken down into years, no.

**Mr Thompson:** The department does not have that breakdown either. We have a number of 380,000 crown-of-thorns starfish killed to date through the various—

**Senator URQUHART:** 380,000?

**Mr Thompson:** Yes, through the whole program.

**Ms M Johnson:** Through the program.

**Mr Thompson:** Yes, it is 2012, 2013—

**Senator URQUHART:** Since 2012?

**Mr Thompson:** Yes.

**Senator URQUHART:** You do not do a yearly breakdown?

**Ms M Johnson:** We would have those numbers, but we just do not have them here.

**Senator URQUHART:** Are you able to get that information?

**Ms M Johnson:** Yes.

**Senator URQUHART:** By the end of today?

**Ms M Johnson:** Yes.

**Answer:**

1. During the 2014-2015 financial year the crown-of-thorns starfish control programme received \$5.05 million. This comprised \$2,000,000 in funding from Reef Programme; \$800,000 from Reef Trust 2, via the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority; and \$1,800,000 from Reef Trust 1, via the Reef and Rainforest Research Centre (RRRC) (Refer to **Attachment A**) The crown-of-thorns starfish control programme was also indirectly supported by Australian Government investment in research via \$450,000 of funding from Reef Programme and substantial in-kind support for surveillance from the Joint Field Management Program.

2. During the 2014-2015 financial year one vessel *MV Hero* was funded for the entire period. In addition, a second vessel, *MV Venus* was commissioned and managed by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority for eight months. The *MV Venus* was managed for the remainder of the year by the Reef and Rainforest Research Centre under the Reef Trust 1 funding. The vessel(s) are typically crewed by 10 people — a skipper and mate and eight control divers — however this number varies dependent on whether research and surveillance activities are conducted concurrently with the culling work.

<b>Crown-of-Thorns Starfish Control Programme</b>							
<b>Funding source</b>	<b>2012-13</b>	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2016-17</b>	<b>2017-18</b>	<b>Total</b>
Control - NHT/Reef Programme	2	3.1	2				7.1
Control - Trust - Phase1			1.8	0.2			2
Control - Trust - Phase 2			0.8	1.6	2.3	2.3	7
<b>Control Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>16.1</b>
NERP Research and Development	0.3						0.3
NHT/Reef Programme Research and Development	0.1	0.55	0.45				1.1
<b>Research and Development Total</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>0.55</b>	<b>0.45</b>				<b>1.4</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>3.65</b>	<b>5.05</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>17.5</b>