

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates February 2016

Agriculture and Water Resources

Question: 230

Division/Agency: Plant Health Australia

Topic: White paper initiatives

Proof Hansard page: 91-92

Senator STERLE asked:

Senator STERLE: Good. Has Plant Health Australia been approached by the government to facilitate any of the white paper initiatives, particularly around biosecurity and traceability?

Mr Fraser: Not to the best of my knowledge, but there could be other conversations going on within the business.

Senator STERLE: Take it on notice; if there is any change, you will be able to tell us. That, Chair, is me wrapped up.

Answer:

Please refer to Hansard from Senate Estimates 9 February 2016 pages 90 to 92.

Plant Health Australia (PHA) work closely with the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources on a wide range of plant biosecurity issues. Although we are not specifically facilitating any particular projects at this time, PHA is working closely with Plant Health Committee on a number of topics included in *Improving Biosecurity Surveillance* and *Technical Market Access* white paper measures, including surveillance, risk analysis, review of import conditions and export technical market access.

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates February 2016

Agriculture and Water Resources

Question: 231

Division/Agency: Plant Health Australia

Topic: Plant biosecurity and management of fruit flies

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator STERLE asked:

Can you provide the committee with an update on how you will undertake to improve coordination among your multiple stakeholders to tackle the issues of plant biosecurity and management of fruit flies?

Answer:

Plant Health Australia (PHA) works with our multiple stakeholders daily. These include but are not limited to, the Australian Government, all state and territory governments and 35 plant industry peak bodies, as well as a number of Rural Research and Development Corporations as PHA members. Specific information can be found on the PHA website at <http://www.planthealthaustralia.com.au/>.

Regarding management of fruit flies, this was partly addressed in Greg Fraser, Executive Director and CEO of PHA's response at the hearing and is captured in proof Hansard pages 90 and 91. In addition however PHA has now employed a National Manager for the Fruit Fly Council and finalised membership of the Council. The Council is currently comprised of 6 grower and industry representatives from WA, SA, Victoria, NSW and Queensland who are engaged with a range of fruit fly impacted commodities. There are also a number of government regulator and policy representatives as well as research and development providers. The council has an independent chairman. As well at the Fruit Fly Council initiative, PHA works with government and industry parties on a number of specific fruit fly projects. All these activities have the aim of improving national co-ordination and ensuring that fruit flies are no longer a constraint to sustainable production or a significant barrier to national and international trade.

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates February 2016

Agriculture and Water Resources

Question: 232

Division/Agency: Plant Health Australia

Topic: PHA relocation

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator STERLE asked:

What were the main reasons why PHA decided not to proceed with re-location with AHA?

Has PHA signed a new lease? Where are your new premises or have you decided to stayed in your original premises?

Answer:

The primary reason that Plant Health Australia (PHA) and Animal Health Australia (AHA) did not co-locate was that PHA could not identify an option that was cost beneficial. Once the decision was made not to co-locate, PHA initiated negotiations with the current landlord regarding a new lease. As well as a reduction in rent, we also negotiated a number of improvements to the site, some of which have now been completed. These negotiations have realised a saving in excess of 15 per cent per annum over the next 5 years. It should also be noted that we have also avoided any disruption to business and relocation costs.

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates February 2016

Agriculture and Water Resources

Question: 233

Division/Agency: Plant Health Australia

Topic: White paper initiatives

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator STERLE asked:

Has PHA been approached by the Government to facilitate any of the White Paper Initiatives?
Particularly in biosecurity and traceability?

Answer:

Please see response to Question on Notice 230.