



Australian Government
Department of Agriculture

Senator the Hon. Bill Heffernan
Chair
Senate Rural and Regional Affairs
and Transport Legislation Committee
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Senator Heffernan

Having reviewed the proof Hansard of the Budget Estimates hearing conducted by the Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee on Monday 25 and Tuesday 26 May 2015, I write to provide corrections to and further clarification of information I provided to the committee at the Budget Estimates hearing.

The first clarification relates to my response to a question from Senator Cameron for which the relevant dialogue is on page 86 of the 26 May proof Hansard:

Senator CAMERON: Let us go to the drought concessional loans. Figures were heard yesterday, if my jottings and my notes here are right, that the take-up is \$114.9 million and the number approved is \$193 million. There is \$280 million available. Have you had a chance to look at those figures and check that they are correct?

Ms Willock: That is for the Drought Concessional Loans Scheme?

Senator CAMERON: That is what I said, yes.

Ms Willock: Yes. That is the uptake as at 30 April 2015. The only thing I would mention is that the funding available is \$270 million.

I had confirmed as correct the figure of \$193 million incorrectly quoted by Senator Cameron, 'Yes. That is the uptake as at 30 April 2015'. My response should read: 'Yes. That is the uptake as at 30 April 2015. The only things I would mention are that the funding available is \$270 million and 193 is the number of farm businesses approved.'

The second clarification relates to my response to a question from Senator Cameron for which the relevant dialogue is on page 87 of the 26 May proof Hansard:

Senator CAMERON: Has that been reduced?

Ms Willock: Ten million dollars of the originally announced \$280 million was subsequently redirected to the drought recovery loans scheme. I can give you the figures on the current uptake of that.

I had advised that 'Ten million dollars of the originally announced \$280 million was subsequently redirected to the drought recovery loans scheme.' I wish to clarify the full name of the programme I referenced, so that my response should read: 'Ten million dollars of the originally announced \$280 million was subsequently redirected to the Drought Recovery Concessional Loans Scheme.'

The third clarification relates to my response to a question from Senator Cameron for which the relevant dialogue is on page 89 of the 26 May proof Hansard:

Senator CAMERON: For the farm finance SCL, the last figure you gave was \$162 million in take-up and 353 approved. Is it still \$420 million? Has there been any money skimmed off that?

Ms Willock: The first two numbers that you have mentioned remain correct as at 30 April. The \$420 million was available over two financial years, and it was split between those two financial years. So \$210 million was available in 2013-14 and a further \$210 million is currently available in 2014-15.

I had confirmed as correct the figure of \$162 million incorrectly quoted by Senator Cameron, 'The first two numbers that you have mentioned remain correct as at 30 April.' The correct response should read: '\$167 million and 353 are correct as at 30 April.'

Thank you for the opportunity to review the transcript of the Budget Estimates hearing held on 26-26 May 2015 and to provide these clarifications and corrections.

Yours sincerely

Anna Willock
A/g First Assistant Secretary
Agricultural Adaptation and Forestry Division
19 June 2015