

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

Agriculture

Question: 344

Division/Agency: Australian Fisheries Management Authority

Topic: Southern Ocean surveillance

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator Whish-Wilson asked:

1. What co-operation has AFMA undertaken with New Zealand in regards to surveillance and enforcement of IUU activities in the Southern Ocean?
2. What co-operation has AFMA undertaken with France in regards to surveillance and enforcement of IUU activities in the Southern Ocean?
3. What multi-lateral co-operation has AFMA undertaken in regards to surveillance and enforcement of IUU activities in the Southern Ocean?
4. What international cooperation is planned for the upcoming Summer in regards to surveillance and enforcement of IUU activities in the Southern Ocean?
5. What surveillance activity has AFMA carried out in the Southern Ocean over the current and immediately previous financial year?
6. How many days surveillance did the Ocean Protector carry out in the Southern Ocean for the 2012-13 financial year?
7. When does the ADV Ocean Shield become available for Southern Ocean surveillance efforts?
8. What is the AFMA total budget for Southern Ocean surveillance for the 2012-13 financial year?
9. How many staff does AFMA have working on Southern Ocean surveillance and enforcement?
10. What level of reimbursement did AFMA or the Australian government provide the French Government for surveillance carried out on the Australian government's behalf in the Southern Ocean?
11. What treaties or agreements does Australia have with other nations in regards to Southern Ocean surveillance and enforcement of fisheries activities?
12. When will the Ocean Protector begin its surveillance activities in the Southern Ocean over the coming Summer?

Question: 344 (continued)

13. What and how many IUU activities has Australia detected in the Southern Ocean for each of the last five financial years?
14. What and how many IUU activities have other National Government's informed us about IUU in our Southern Ocean territorial waters or EEZs for each of the past 5 financial years?
15. What cooperation is planned between Australian Customs, the Australian Defence Force and AFMA in regards to ongoing surveillance in the Southern Ocean?

Answer:

1. AFMA regularly exchanges Southern Ocean surveillance and enforcement information with New Zealand and AFMA deployed a fisheries officer on the first New Zealand Southern Ocean patrol.
2. AFMA regularly exchanges Southern Ocean surveillance and enforcement information with France and deploys officers on board all French patrols to the Southern Ocean.
3. AFMA has participated in two multi-lateral surveillance and enforcement operations in or near the Southern Ocean resulting in the apprehension of two IUU vessels. The countries involved were France, the United Kingdom and South Africa. AFMA also cooperates with port states in South East Asia to minimise opportunities for Southern Ocean vessels to unload illicit catch and take on supplies to support illegal fishing operations.

This has led to:

- vessels being intercepted, investigated or denied port access in Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore
 - IUU vessels being deregistered by their flag state
 - legal action being taken by the countries whose nationals have been identified as being on board IUU vessels.
4. AFMA plans to continue working with counterpart agencies in countries which have an interest in combatting IUU fishing in the Southern Ocean and deploying officers on Southern Ocean patrols.
 5. AFMA has deployed officers on three (3) French patrols in 2012-13 and two (2) French patrols in 2013-14 to the Southern Ocean (to 1 December 2013).
 6. Zero (0)
 7. This question has been referred to Department of Customs and Border Protection.
 8. The AFMA 2012-13 budget for the southern compliance operations function was \$1,440,700 (including overheads).

Question: 344 (continued)

9. AFMA draws from its total pool of officers to provide patrol officers, IUU port interdiction and international cooperation activities. The number of officers committed to the program will vary at any one time based on risk and activity levels.
10. This question has been referred to Department of Customs and Border Protection.
11. Australia is party to;
 - the Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources;
 - the Treaty Between the Government of Australia and the French Republic on Cooperation in the Maritime Areas Adjacent to the French Southern and Antarctic Territories, Heard Island and McDonald Islands;
 - the Agreement on Cooperative Enforcement of Fisheries Laws between the Government of Australia and the government of the French Republic in the Maritime Areas Adjacent to the French Southern and Antarctic Territories, Heard Island and McDonald Islands.
12. This question has been referred to Department of Customs and Border Protection.
13. The following table sets out the number of IUU vessels, either fishing or equipped to fish, sighted by Australian platforms on the high seas inside the CCAMLR Convention area for the last 5 financial years.

Financial Year	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014*
Number IUU vessel's sighted	4	4	3	0	0

* to 1 December 2014

14. This QON has been referred to BPC for response
15. This QON has been referred to BPC for response

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Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

Agriculture

Question: 345

Division/Agency: Sustainable Resource Management Division/Australian Fisheries Management Authority

Topic: Patagonian toothfish

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator WHISH-WILSON asked:

How many tonnes of Patagonian toothfish been harvested from Australian fisheries from each of the last 5 financial years?

Answer:

		Weight (Tonnes)	Weight (Tonnes)	Weight (Tonnes)
Financial Year	Species	HIMI* Fishery	MI+ Fishery	Total
2008/2009	Patagonian toothfish	2893.1	452.5	3345.6
2009/2010	Patagonian toothfish	2277.6	476.1	2753.7
2010/2011	Patagonian toothfish	2485.4	150.4	2635.8
2011/2012	Patagonian toothfish	2427.1	269.6	2696.7
2012/2013	Patagonian toothfish	2371.5	505.6	2877.1
				14 308.9

* HIMI = Heard and Macdonald Islands

+ MI = Macquarie Island

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Question: 346

Division/Agency: Sustainable Resource Management Division/Australian Fisheries Management Authority

Topic: Antarctic krill fisheries

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator WHISH-WILSON asked:

What studies have AFMA undertaken into the sustainability of the Antarctic Krill fisheries?

Answer:

None.

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Question: 351

Division/Agency: Sustainable Resource Management Division/Australian Fisheries Management Authority

Topic: Location of AFMA

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator STERLE asked:

1. What is the current status of the property rented by AFMA?
2. What is the annual rent paid by AFMA?
3. What considerations have been made to consolidate the property owned or rented by AFMA?

Answer:

1. Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) has current leases for office space in the ACT and NT.
2. The Canberra lease end date is 31 December 2018 and the annual rent paid for the 2012-2013 financial year was \$1,574,134.02.

The Darwin lease end date is 30 October 2015 and the annual rent paid for the 2012-2013 financial year was \$498,750.36.

3. AFMA regularly reviews property requirements as part of the updating of the AFMA Property Management Plan and Accommodation Manual. AFMA has already subleased one of its four floors of Canberra office space for the period 1 February 2012 until 31 January 2016.

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Question: 352

Division/Agency: Sustainable Resource Management Division/Australian Fisheries Management Authority

Topic: CEO Travel

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator STERLE asked:

What travel has the CEO of AFMA conducted in the past twelve months?

- a) What overseas travel has the CEO of AFMA conducted in the past twelve months?
- b) What was the cost of this travel?

Answer:

The Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) Chief Executive Officer, Dr James Findlay has made the following trips in the past 12 months:

- i) 22-23 October 2012 – AFMA Commission Meeting, Coffs Harbour
- ii) 7 November 2012 - Northern Prawn Fishery, Marine Stewardship Council Certification Launch, Sydney
- iii) 20 November 2012 – Threatened Species Scientific Committee, Sydney
- iv) 10-14 December 2012 – AFMA Darwin Office visit
- v) 6 February 2013 – Meeting with State Fisheries, Melbourne
- vi) 28 February and 1 March 2013 – Torres Strait Regional Authority Board Meeting, Thursday Island
- vii) 5 May 2013 – Offshore Constitutional Settlement meeting with State Fisheries, Sydney
- viii) 5 June 2013 – Meeting with South Australian Fisheries and Southern Bluefin Tuna Industry, Adelaide
- ix) 12-14 June 2013 – Stakeholder and Torres Strait Regional Authority Board Meetings, Thursday Island
- x) 14-16 June 2013 - Meeting with State Fisheries, Melbourne, and Port Visits, Tasmania
- xi) 8-11 July 2013 – Port Visits, NSW South Coast, Lakes Entrance and Melbourne
- xii) 28-29 August 2013 – Seafood Excellence Awards and Stakeholder meetings, Sydney
- xiii) 14-16 October 2013 – Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna meeting, Adelaide
- xiv) 23-24 October 2013 – AFMA Commission Meeting, Hobart
- xv) 27-31 October 2013 – Seafood Directions Conference, Port Lincoln.
 - a) The Chief Executive Officer has not travelled overseas in the past 12 months.
 - b) The total cost of the above travel was \$24 598.29

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Question: 353

Division/Agency: Sustainable Resource Management Division/Australian Fisheries Management Authority

Topic: Functions to the department

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator STERLE asked:

Has AFMA considered allowing or incorporating its “back-end” or secretariat functions into the department?

Answer:

Yes. Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) has recently benchmarked a range of its back end functions and services and this indicates that it remains more cost effective to conduct these services in house.

Secretariat services to AFMA committees require specialist technical knowledge and it is more efficient to continue to provide these services in house.

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Question: 354

Division/Agency: Sustainable Resource Management Division/Australian Fisheries Management Authority

Topic: speak to industry about domestic fishing industry

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator STERLE asked:

Does AFMA encourage or speak to industry about supporting the expansion of the domestic fishing industry?

Answer:

Yes.

Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) works closely with industry, scientists & other experts and stakeholders to develop sustainable fisheries resources to optimise net economic returns to the Australian community. Rebuilds of fish stocks previously subject to overharvest has allowed sustainable expansion in a number of major AFMA-managed fisheries. A system of statutory fishing rights provides industry with a secure foundation to underpin investment in the Commonwealth fishing industry.

In addition to supporting the sustainable development of well-known established fisheries, AFMA has a policy for fishery exploration to support development of new commercial species. Fisheries Management Paper 5 sets out the policy and process for the exploration of Commonwealth fish resources. It provides information on the rights and obligations for operators wishing to establish and gain access to an exploratory fishery and aims to provide transparency and certainty for stakeholders involved in such a process.

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Question: 355

Division/Agency: Sustainable Resource Management Division/Australian Fisheries Management Authority

Topic: Status of sea lion interactions

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator STERLE asked:

What is the current status of sea lion interactions in the gillnet sector of the Southern and Eastern Scale fish and Shark Fishery?

Answer:

Mitigation action taken by AFMA and industry, with the assistance of marine mammal experts and conservation group representatives, has been highly successful in reducing the gillnet interactions with Australian sea lions.

Since the Senate Estimates hearing in May 2013, there has been only one sea lion death reported in the gillnet fishery.