

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

Agriculture

Question: 213

Division/Agency: Border Compliance Division

Topic: Location of Enforcement and Investigation

Proof Hansard page: 35

Senator RHIANNON asked:

Ms Mellor: The area that does investigations in the department does investigations that may lead to prosecutions.

Senator RHIANNON: How many of these people are there, please?

Ms Mellor: Well, that is the 21 investigators.

Senator RHIANNON: So they are—

Ms Mellor: It is an area called Enforcement and Investigation, it is located in the Border Compliance Division and, on behalf of the department, it conducts work for quarantine, live animal exports and illegal logging.

Senator RHIANNON: Could you take it on notice and tell us where they are located, please?

Ms Mellor: I certainly can.

Answer:

The Investigations and Enforcement program has 22 investigative positions. The breakdown of those positions by location is:

Central East Region (Sydney) – A Regional Investigations Manager and five investigators

North East Region (Brisbane) – A Regional Investigations Manager and five investigators

South East Region (Melbourne) – A Regional Investigations manager and three investigators

South West Region – A Regional Investigations Manager (Perth) and five investigators (three Perth and two Adelaide).

Central Office (ACT) – No investigative personnel. Staffing consists of one National Program Manager, four intelligence analysts and three program support staff.

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

Agriculture

Question: 214

Division/Agency: Border Compliance Division

Topic: Biosecurity risks

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator STERLE asked:

Explain how staffing reductions on frontline services will strengthen the Department's ability to manage Biosecurity risks effectively.

Answer:

Please refer to the answer to Border Compliance Division question on notice 215 from the Supplementary Budget Estimates hearing in November 2013.

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

Agriculture

Question: 215

Division/Agency: Border Compliance Division

Topic: Reduction for 220 frontline services

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator STERLE asked:

Can the Minister Guarantee that reduction for 220 frontline services will not impact or jeopardise Australia's strong reputation of safe, clean food?

Answer:

The staffing reductions in Border Compliance Division are not exclusively targeted at frontline staff. In addition, while a significant portion of redundancies are expected in Border Compliance Division, the 220 estimate is a whole of department figure, including staff in policy and administrative roles.

In relation to the Border Compliance Division, the department uses a risk return approach to manage Biosecurity services at the border – this approach has been developed over a number of years.

The reduction in staffing will be achieved primarily by improving efficiency in service delivery, work practice design and reducing intervention on some low risk pathways, where importers, passengers and mail consignees have demonstrated strong compliance with biosecurity requirements.

At the same time the department is also reallocating resources to areas of highest risk, which will reduce the likelihood of pest or disease incursions and their impacts on Australian agriculture.