

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates October 2015

Agriculture and Water Resources

Question: 121

Division/Agency: Meat and Livestock Australia

Topic: Al Rai market in Kuwait

Proof Hansard page: 97

Senator RHIANNON asked:

Senator RHIANNON: How many times have MLA personnel visited the Al Rai market in Kuwait over the past month for September?

Mr Norton: I do not have exact details. I can give you names of all MLA people that are employed under the live exporters program and contractors that visit the facility if required.

Senator RHIANNON: So, you could give us that detail?

Mr Norton: We would have movement of all personnel.

Senator RHIANNON: Can you give September and up to now?

Mr Norton: Yes.

Senator RHIANNON: When would that be available?

Mr Norton: I can have that quite quickly. We would have movements of staff that are employed under the LEP program.

Senator RHIANNON: That would be the details of when they visited that marketplace?

Mr Norton: Yes.

Senator RHIANNON: Both contractors and employees?

Mr Norton: Yes. I am assuming that they have, so I can certainly get the detail.

Answer:

Under the Livestock Export Program (LEP) there were 13 staff across six countries in the Middle East region during the Festival of Eid al-Adha. In relation to the Al Rai market in Kuwait, LEP representatives (employees and contractors) visited the market five times between 7 and 29 September 2015.

Question: 121 (continued)

Given the importance of on-going in-market relationships and the ability to deliver program outcomes, it would not be appropriate to disclose the names of individual LEP representatives. All care is taken to protect LEP staff from being put at risk by special interest groups.

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates October 2015

Agriculture and Water Resources

Question: 122

Division/Agency: Meat and Livestock Australia

Topic: Employees in the Middle East – Eid al-Adha

Proof Hansard page: 98-99

Senator RHIANNON asked:

Senator RHIANNON: The first you have heard of it. How many employees did MLA have in the Middle East in the lead-up to and during the Eid al-Adha issue?

Mr Norton: I can get you the exact details. Again, we sent a lot of resources to help industry work through what is the major festival, but we have 23 staff under the LE program across six countries. A number of Australian staff were sent across to help the process of what is a major festival and a major logistics operation during that time.

Senator RHIANNON: Could you supply details of the number of staff and what their positions were?

Mr Norton: Absolutely.

Senator RHIANNON: Also, what countries they were in and what markets they worked at?

Mr Norton: Absolutely.

Senator RHIANNON: You may have this, otherwise it can come with that information I just asked for. I am interested in what countries MLA had representatives in for this current round of festivals?

Mr Norton: Absolutely. In Kuwait we had 11 staff during the Eid festival: six in Oman, three in Bahrain, three in Jordan, four in Qatar, and seven in UAE. That would be a mix of MLA employees who are engaged under the LEP program and contractors.

Senator RHIANNON: Again, maybe you need to come back with the numbers when the big festivals are not on.

Mr Norton: It is significantly less. Those numbers demonstrate the matter of importance and the matter of urgency we place around such a festival.

Senator RHIANNON: If you could also supply details of how you step that up and what it is at other times please?

Mr Norton: Yes.

Question: 122 (continued)

Senator RHIANNON: Can you provide the dates that each representative was in each country including their location? I think we have got this. I will just see if it captures everything. Can you provide the dates that each representative was in each country, including the locations and facilities that each representative visited and the time and the date of those visits? I am asking for a little bit more information there, including the location and the dates that they went to these different sites.

Mr Norton: Absolutely.

Senator RHIANNON: Are you right to come back to me on that?

Mr Norton: Absolutely.

Answer:

Livestock Export Program (LEP) consultants are engaged at the request of the exporter throughout the year to provide animal handling and slaughter training, infrastructure advice, gap analysis and risk assessment. LEP has no legal powers in export markets and is not the regulator of Exporter Supply Chain Assurance System approved slaughter facilities. LEP is not a statutory authority.

In the lead up to Eid al-Adha additional LEP staff were contracted – the LEP Eid program had 13 representatives in the Middle East region in the period immediately prior to and during Eid al-Adha. These included LEP, Meat and Livestock Australia and LiveCorp staff and contractors. There were also 11 exporter representatives present during this period. Of the LEP staff, five were predominately stationed in Kuwait; two in Oman; one in Jordan; one in Qatar and two the UAE. Three LEP staff spent time across some or all countries. There is one LEP representative permanently stationed in the Middle East.

Given the importance of on-going in-market relationships, the ability to deliver program outcomes and personnel security, it would not be appropriate to disclose further detail on personnel or location. All care is taken to protect LEP staff from being put at risk by special interest groups.

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates October 2015

Agriculture and Water Resources

Question: 123

Division/Agency: Meat and Livestock Australia

Topic: Reports provided

Proof Hansard page: 99

Senator RHIANNON asked:

Senator RHIANNON: Do they report daily and do those people on the ground put in a written report?

Mr Norton: I suspect that during Eid it would be quite difficult to report daily but there would certainly be a wrap-up of the festival, what happened and what could happen differently, understanding that, even going back two to three years, what processes keep evolving year by year have been significant to reduce any leakage.

Senator RHIANNON: If you have not got the details now could you come back to us about how frequently the reports are made by people on the ground?

Mr Norton: Absolutely.

Senator RHIANNON: Can you provide the daily reports that you receive?

Mr Norton: In any reporting systems that we receive, that the department or industry would allow us to distribute, then I am more than happy to distribute, so whatever reports are available. We obviously track staff. We track what they are doing. We have their reports and I am more than happy to share those reports.

Answer:

During the Eid program, Livestock Export Program (LEP) representatives provided verbal updates to senior LEP staff in the region on program delivery progress.

At the conclusion of Eid al-Adha a report summarising the outcomes of the LEP Eid Program is provided to the exporters who engaged the program, detailing how their supply chains performed, for their use. Additionally, a summary report with commercially sensitive material removed will be provided to the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources.

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates October 2015

Agriculture and Water Resources

Question: 124

Division/Agency: Meat and Livestock Australia

Topic: ESCAS breaches

Proof Hansard page: 99

Senator RHIANNON asked:

Senator RHIANNON: How many breaches of ESCAS did MLA notify the department of over the past two months?

Mr Norton: Again, I will take that on notice because they are detailed. MLA, again, has taken the view that within 24 hours all leakages are reported to the exporter and then reported to the department. We obviously run a log of what those breaches are under the ESCAS system.

Senator RHIANNON: When you supply that information can you include the time and date when those breaches were observed and what time and date the department was notified?

Mr Norton: Yes.

Answer:

Meat and Livestock Australia notified the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources of nine suspected Exporter Supply Chain Assurance System breaches between 20 August and 20 October 2015.

Provided below are the dates that the suspected breaches were observed and dates the department was notified.

Suspected breach notifications 20 August 2015 – 20 October 2015

Country	Species	Suspected ESCAS breach (eg leakage or animal welfare issue)	Date of observation	Date department notified
Southern China	Cattle	Leakage	21/08/2015	Dept. notified by exporter on 22/08/2015

Kuwait	Sheep	Leakage	27/08/2015	LEP notified exporters on 27/08/2015; LEP notified Dept. on 9/09/2015
Kuwait - Eid	Sheep	Leakage	10,11,12,15 & 19/09/2015	LEP notified exporters on 17/09/2015; Dept. received a self-report on 01/10/2015
Oman - Eid	Sheep	Leakage	21/09/2015	LEP notified exporters on 21/09/2015; LEP notified Dept. on 01/10/2015
Vietnam	Cattle	Leakage	24/09/2015	LEP notified Dept. on 30/09/2015
Oman - Eid	Sheep	Leakage	25/09/2015	LEP notified exporters on 25/09/2015; LEP notified Dept. on 01/10/2015
Malaysia	Sheep	Leakage	17 & 18/09/2015	LEP notified exporters on 30/09/2015. Following this, an exporter had already self-reported to Dept. on 24/09/2015 prior to LEP advice.
Middle East – Eid summary to Dept.	Sheep	Leakage	During Eid 23,24 & 25/09/2015	01/10/2015
Malaysia – pre-Korban & Korban summary to Dept.	Cattle, sheep, goats, camels	Leakage	During pre-Korban & Korban 17,18,20,23 & 25/09/2015	08/10/2015

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Supplementary Budget Estimates October 2015

Agriculture and Water Resources

Question: 125

Division/Agency: Meat and Livestock Australia

Topic: Festival of Eid activities

Proof Hansard page: 101

Senator BACK asked:

Senator BACK: From a welfare point of view, do we have any evidence at all in the markets where your staff or associates were overseeing the festival of Eid activities where sheep other than Australian livestock were actually put through the chain in the way that Australian sheep were?

Mr Norton: I would have to take that on notice but, given that Australia has changed a lot of the processes within country and in destination markets, I would suspect at a high level from what I have seen that the rest of the world's inventory in terms of sheep are slaughtered in the same facilities that the Australian sheep are and under the same conditions.

Answer:

The provision of livestock handling, slaughter training and assisting with the installation and upgrading of infrastructure in feedlots and abattoirs has meant that in the vast majority of Exporter Supply Chain Assurance System approved facilities, the outcomes of in-market work is applied to the handling and slaughter of both Australian and non-Australian livestock, across the Middle East and North Africa region.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates October 2015

Agriculture and Water Resources

Question: 126

Division/Agency: Meat and Livestock Australia

Topic: Analysis of carrying capacity and climate change

Proof Hansard page: 105

Senator CAMERON asked:

Senator CAMERON: Has any analysis been done, that you are aware of, of carrying capacity and climate change?

Mr Norton: Not that I am aware of from MLA. I can quickly find out and put it in on notice if there has been any work done.

Answer:

The Federal government, together with Meat and Livestock Australia, Australian Wool Innovation and Dairy Australia invested in a project entitled 'Whole Farm Systems Analysis of Climate Change Impacts on the Southern Grazing Industries' (published 2012). It is available online: <http://sla2030.net.au/>.

This project made a number of conclusions and emphasised the need for future research to deliver adaptation options for the livestock industries to maintain profitability.

Following this project, another study on climate adaptation options has been commissioned by the Federal government, Meat and Livestock Australia and Australian Wool Innovation. The research is being done by CSIRO climate applications scientist Mr Steven Crimp and will be published in 2016.