

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates October 2015

Agriculture and Water Resources

Question: 140

Division/Agency: Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation

Topic: From Paddock to Plate, how food prices are determined in Australia report

Proof Hansard page: 71

Senator CAMERON asked:

Senator CAMERON: Can anyone tell me if the report has been sent to the minister's office?

Mr Burns: The minister's office has received a copy of it.

Senator CAMERON: Do you know when the minister received the copy?

Mr Burns: I would have to check the date. I cannot remember.

Answer:

The Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation has not provided a copy of the report to the Minister.

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates October 2015

Agriculture and Water Resources

Question: 141

Division/Agency: Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation

Topic: KIAC

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator RHIANNON asked:

1. In 2013 I asked how there is no conflict of interest in the KIAA awarding its own CEO and international spokesperson (John Kelly) over \$800,000 worth of contracts.
2. The RIRDC advised that the KIAA *“plays no role in the recommendation or selection of research projects.”*
 - a. Does the RIRDC still advise the KIAA *“plays no role in the recommendation or selection of research projects”*?
 - b. Is it still the case that the KIAA chooses the Chair of the RIRDC Kangaroo Industry Advisory Council (KIAC), which recommends the contracts the RIRDC should select for funding - as described in the KIAA’s (then) 2013 Draft Kangaroo Industry Statutory R&D Levy Proposal?
 - c. Is it still the case that the Advisory Council usually meets once a year “in conjunction with the KIAA AGM, to assess full applications and recommend on project funding”? Again as described in the proposal?
 - i. Please provide details on the years the KIAC has had its annual meeting in conjunction with the KIAA AGM.
 - d. Is it still the case that the KIAA’s own annual membership levy is forwarded to the RIRDC to attract commensurate government funding for RIRDC projects?
 - e. The KIAC was to include a representative from each of the 3 major sectors of the commercial kangaroo industry, the RIRDC Manager for the New Animal Products Program (under which kangaroos sit) and one further industry representative from any sector.

Question: 141 (continued)

- i. Please advise how many of the commercial kangaroo industry representatives on the KIAC are *not* members of the KIAA.
- ii. Please advise how many previous members of the KIAC have not been members of the KIAA.

In June this year I lodged a Senate Motion ordering that the RIRDC market research report about messaging to different audiences, *Characterising the Australian public and communicating about kangaroo management* (Project ID: PRJ-008967).

Whilst I am aware that RIRDC research agreements state that the RIRDC may choose to “not publish” any report as it chooses, I am reliably informed it was the Kangaroo Industry Association of Australia (the KIAA) who refused to publically release the report.

Please explain how the KIAA, which represents private business, can refuse to publically release a publically funded report which is about growing an industry that profits out of the shooting of native wildlife?

Answer:

1. No comment.
2.
 - a. When making research, development and extension investment decisions under the Kangaroo sub-program of the New, Developing and Maturing Animal Industries Program, Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC) seeks advice from a Kangaroo Reference Panel and other stakeholders when required. In this process RIRDC does seek advice from the Kangaroo Industry Association of Australia (KIAA) when required.
 - b. Under RIRDC’s ‘Industry Reference Panel Terms of Reference’ policy “Chairs and Members of Industry Reference Panels are appointed by the RIRDC Managing Director. In order to identify suitable people, the Corporation may consult with relevant industry groups and also advertise for applicants for Panel positions.”
 - c. No.
 - i. RIRDC does not have this information. RIRDC seeks advice from a Kangaroo Reference Panel when required and typically by teleconference.
 - d. No.

Question: 141 (continued)

e.

- i. RIRDC's Kangaroo Reference Panel comprises a Chair, one industry member and a RIRDC representative. Both the Chair and the industry member are members of the KIAA.
- ii. RIRDC does not have this information readily available and it would not be administratively cost effective to discover this information.

RIRDC, not KIAA, made the decision not to publish the report from the project PRJ-008967, titled *Characterising the Australian public and communicating about kangaroo management*.

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Supplementary Budget Estimates October 2015

Agriculture and Water Resources

Question: 142

Division/Agency: Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation

Topic: RIRDC KIAC Minutes

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator RHIANNON asked:

May I, how do I, have access to RIRDC Kangaroo Industry Advisory Committee minutes?

Answer:

When making research, development and extension investment decisions under the Kangaroo sub-program of the New, Developing and Maturing Animal Industries Program, Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC) seeks advice from a Kangaroo Reference Panel and other stakeholders when required. RIRDC provides advice as to these investments through RIRDC's website, Annual Operation Plan and Annual Report. If specific information about an investment decision is required, RIRDC can provide this information.

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates October 2015

Agriculture and Water Resources

Question: 143

Division/Agency: Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation

Topic: Funded projects

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator RHIANNON asked:

1. May I please have an updated list of all kangaroo-related research projects since May 2014 involving the RIRDC, either as a funder, a major contributor or partner or supporter: including the authors, cost of each project, dates, aims and Objectives Summary.
2. May I please have a list of all RIRDC kangaroo associated reports or projects that have been contracted to (Dr) Rosie Cooney, or where Rosie Cooney has been an author or associate with the project: Please include the aim and cost of each project.
3. Are there any current or planned projects that are part of an effort to lift California's ban on the importation of kangaroo products? May I please have the researcher details, Objectives and cost?
4. The RIRDC report, *"Characterising the Australian public and communicating about kangaroo management"* sits in the R&D priority of "Reinforcing the license to operate". Its research details as listed on the RIRDC website¹ says it aims to *"provide practical information on how to design specific communications relating to the management of kangaroos"*.

The example given is that the kangaroo industry provides targeted messaging and, I emphasise, **"a government environmental/conservation agency could present information on a specific culling program in order to gain more public acceptance"**.

Social license market research is about how to manipulate information to targeted decision-makers to accept your product or actions, and grow your market :

- a. Please explain how the manipulation of information ("how to design specific communications") to ensure government environmental agencies, or NGO conservation agencies become industry messengers "to gain more public acceptance" for shooting kangaroos, is an exercise in transparency and independent advice?

¹ http://devweb.rirdc.gov.au/research-project-details/custr10_KAN/PRJ-008967

Question: 143 (Continued)

- b. *“Designing specific communications ... to gain more public acceptance”* for the shooting of kangaroos for profit, seems antithesis to the conservation of native wildlife (kangaroos) based on independent and scientifically robust data and research.
- i. Please provide more details about government departments and agencies are doing the industry’s messaging?
- ii. and NGO conservation agencies?
- iii. Is there any requirement to inform government agencies and representatives or conservation agencies that the “designed specific communications” being presented to them are designed to have them do the social license marketing for the industry?
- iv. Are there any RIRDC protocols around transparency of intent in such communications?

Answer:

1. Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation’s (RIRDC) previous advice (Question on Notice 112 from May 2015 Budget Estimates) remains current. There are no updates.
2. Below are the three kangaroo related research projects that have been undertaken by Rosie Cooney for RIRDC.

ID	Project	Objectives	Start	Finish	Pub No.	Cost
PRJ-004398	Feasibility study sustainable use of native mammals in the Australian Pet Industry	The overall objective of the project is to report and make recommendations on the major constraints, opportunities, key people and issues to be considered in the development of a pet industry, with a focus on the eastern quoll and the Mitchell's hopping mouse.	30/01/09	30/06/10	10/072	\$35,000
PRJ-000677	Policy design for conservation through sustainable use: Barriers and Stimuli	The overall goal of this initiative is to identify policy barriers and constraints to Conservation through commercial Sustainable Use of wildlife (CSU) in Australia and develop recommendations for policy that actively supports and stimulates CSU focussing in particular on current efforts to	1/05/06	15/06/07	08-199	\$30,490

		promote Sustainable Wildlife Enterprises (SWEs).				
PRJ-000066	Models for sharing benefits from wildlife harvesting among collaborating landholders	The major objectives of this project are: (i) to develop a feasible model (or models) for devolution of property rights in wildlife to landholders for presentation to regulatory agencies with a view to attracting their support for implementation on a trial basis in the Sustainable Wildlife Enterprise trials; (ii) to develop feasible models for equitable sharing and distribution of benefits among landholders involved in collaborative resource management arrangements to provide a basis for negotiation and discussion with landholders in three ongoing Sustainable Wildlife Enterprise trials. Achieving these two objectives will contribute directly to enabling the commercial viability of SWEs to be realised facilitating the contribution of commercial wildlife utilisation to environmental and socio-economic benefits and enhancing the potential for integration of conventional and wildlife-based enterprises.	12/03/07	30/06/08	08-150	\$60,000

3. No.

4.

a. The preparation of the report was consistent with RIRDC's purpose and function.

b.

i. This question is unable to be answered by RIRDC.

ii. This question is unable to be answered by RIRDC.

iii. RIRDC did not perform this function.

iv. This question is not applicable as RIRDC did not perform this function.

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Question: 144

Division/Agency: Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation

Topic: KIAA CEO conflicts of interests funding

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator RHIANNON asked:

KIAA CEO Conflicts of interest funding

1. In February 2013 Senate Estimates I was advised that from 2000 to 2011, the RIRDC had awarded \$800,312 worth of contracts to John Kelly, CEO of the Kangaroo Industry Association of Australia and owner of the commercial wallaby meat, fur and skins processor and exporter Lenah Game Meats, for 11 RIRDC reports to grow the sales of products made from commercially shot kangaroos. I note also Mr Kelly currently has an application with the Department of Environment to export up to 60,000 Bennett's wallaby skins per year.
 - a. How many RIRDC kangaroo projects have been awarded to Lenah Consulting or John Kelly since 2010:? If any:
 - i. what was/is the aim of each project
 - ii. what was the value of funding/cost?
 - b. The RIRDC funded Mr Kelly \$236,664 for "*Research to assist market development for kangaroo products in California & New York*" from 2008 to 2011. This included Kelly's report "*California, New York, the World and Kangaroos*".
 - c. Please provide a detailed breakdown of how that \$236,664 was spent.

Answer:

1.
 - a. There have been no projects awarded to Lenah Consulting or John Kelly since 2010.
 - b. No comment.
 - c. Project funds were spent consistent with the project contract. The majority of the funds (\$206 584) were used by the project provider to engage a firm of US consultants. The consultants were engaged to develop and implement a process to inform Californian and New York legislators in 2009 and 2010 as to the regulation and sustainability of the kangaroo industry, from materials made available by the provider. The remainder of the funds were used by the provider to collate the materials and manage the consultants.

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Agriculture and Water Resources

Question: 145

Division/Agency: Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation

Topic: Agriculture White Paper commitment

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator SIEWART asked:

1. There was a \$13.8 million commitment related to the Agriculture White Paper for the RIRDC to 'provide farmers with knowledge and materials on cooperatives, collective bargaining and innovative business models'. What has the progress been on that?
2. How much of the funding allocated has been received by the RIRDC?
3. How much has been spent?
4. What are the concrete outcomes to date?
5. What is planned with the remaining funds?

Answer:

1. Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC) was contracted by the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources to undertake design and scoping work for the Co-operatives and Innovative Business Models two year pilot program.
2. RIRDC has received \$200 000 (GST not applicable) for the design and scoping project.
3. RIRDC has spent or committed the full \$200 000 received.
4. RIRDC has provided a report, including a draft program framework, for the consideration of the Department and the Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources. RIRDC provided its report to the Department on 23 October 2015.
5. Final decisions on the scope and nature of the program have not yet been made.