

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Budget Estimates February 2009

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: AFMA 01

Division/Agency: Australian Fisheries Management Authority

Topic: Management Advisory Committee Rationalisation

Hansard Page: 68 (23/02/2009)

Senator Colbeck asked:

Senator COLBECK—Could you provide us with a list of your consultative group?

Mr Hurry—Yes.

Senator COLBECK—You can provide us with details of those.

Dr Rayns—We can, indeed.

Senator COLBECK—So the closing date for this feedback is 20 March?

Dr Rayns—I would have to check. It is a four-week consultation process, so that sounds about right.

Senator COLBECK—Okay. And those that receive the stakeholder letters would be that list that you are giving us? When you provide me with that stakeholder information, I would be interested in both the initial stakeholder group and also those who received the letter, if you could take that as part of it.

Answer:

The Australian Fisheries Management Authority consulted broadly on the rationalisation of the Management Advisory Committees (MACs). The consultation process occurred in two stages:

Stage 1: Two separate workshops were held involving invited participants from all stakeholder groups including fishing industry, MACs, conservation non-government organisations, recreational and game fishing interests, and AFMA staff.

Stage 2: Based on the outcomes of these workshops AFMA prepared a consultation package including a covering letter, a discussion paper on the proposed MAC rationalisation and a copy of a revised policy document that outlined the future operation of the MACs under the new arrangements.

This consultation package was sent to everyone who currently holds a Commonwealth fishing concession in addition to other relevant stakeholder representatives.

Attached are two Excel spreadsheets that list the names of:

1. Stakeholders invited to participate at the workshops; and
2. Stakeholders who received the consultation package.

The closing date for comments on the MAC rationalisation is 20 March 2009.

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Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: AFMA 02

Division/Agency: Australian Fisheries Management Authority

Topic: E-lodgements

Hansard Page: 69-70 (23/02/2009)

Senator Colbeck asked:

Senator COLBECK—Okay. Do you have any specific information on those particular e-projects?

Mr Hurry—Yes, we do. We have been using it in the process of informing industry and I am quite happy to share that with you.

Senator COLBECK—I would appreciate that. Thanks very much. What has your feedback been on the eLodgement service, and what is your anticipated take-up—or is it a mandatory process?

Mr Hurry—On the estimations we did, we were looking for about an 80 per cent take-up on the system. But as we get into this and it becomes better tested, we would move it across most fisheries. I suspect we would be looking for a mandatory take-up on this, I would think, as we move forward because the benefits of this are getting as many as you can on an electronic log system so we can pull some of the paper based systems out of the organisation. That is where we are trying to head. But we are also conscious that some of the vessels we have in the fisheries do not have the electronics to allow them to use some of these technologies. So we know we will have to probably keep a small set on more paper based reporting, but the more we can get over the more efficiencies we gain as an organisation.

Senator COLBECK—How much have you spent on the system at the moment?

Mr Hurry—I would have to take that on notice and get you the figures, but I think on e-log it is probably about \$1.5 million.

Senator COLBECK—I would be interested in getting a sense of the costs of your other suite of projects as well. That would be good. What are your anticipated cost savings?

Mr Hurry—It depends on the take-up. I am happy to share what figures we have on that with you, but I would have to take the figures on this on notice.

Senator COLBECK—Let us say an 80 per cent take-up, which is what you indicated you were aiming for. What sort of efficiencies would that bring you?

Mr Hurry—Let me take that one on notice for you and I will get the correct figures for you.

Answer:

AFMA is currently undertaking a detailed analysis of the costs attributed to various aspects of the e-business projects and anticipates being able to provide these figures to the Committee by 18 April 2009.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Budget Estimates February 2009

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: AFMA 03

Division/Agency: Australian Fisheries Management Authority

Topic: IUU Vessels

Hansard Page: 71 (23/02/2009)

Senator Macdonald asked:

Mr Venslovas—There is no sign of any IUU vessels inside the Australian or French zones. There is still the odd IUU vessel fishing in CCAMLR waters, but certainly not inside Australian waters.

Senator IAN MACDONALD—Could you perhaps just on notice though give me the allocation of time for the *Oceanic Viking* to fisheries and to other matters, both in calendar year 2008 and up-to-date as far as you have them? I have another issue, very quickly, if I can just impose on Senator Colbeck for a second and then I will depart, for Mr Kalish—and you are listed to appear later in another section of the department, but it is here that I want to ask you this anyhow—you gave me a very good report on the IOTC after the last estimates. You talked about the internal performance review focusing on the effectiveness of the commission to fulfil its mandate. There was a meeting held in Kobe in January 2008. The first meeting of the review panel was held in February 2008. I am just wondering if you could give me an update, perhaps on notice, about the progress. You have given me a very detailed answer on notice from the last estimates, which is good. I am just wondering if there has been any further progress or if we are just stalled—or rather if the international community is stalled not us?

Answer:

In the 2008 calendar year, AFMA used the *Oceanic Viking* for four fisheries patrols. The Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts used the *Oceanic Viking* for one patrol to monitor Japanese whaling operations.

For the calendar year 2009 to 4 March one fisheries patrol has been conducted.