

**Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

Additional Estimates February 2009

**Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry**

**Question:** WEA 01

**Division/Agency:** WEA

**Topic:** Report by the Export Wheat Commission – When will the Minister release it?

**Hansard Page:** 22-23 (23/02/2009)

**Senator Williams asked:**

**Senator WILLIAMS**—Even people such as Senator Nash stored their grain on farm this year. The reason, one would think, is a lack of confidence. On another point, was there an inquiry into the wheat board's chartering activities by the wheat export authority?

**Mr Woods**—Yes, there was an inquiry by the Export Wheat Commission.

**Senator WILLIAMS**—Has that report been released?

**Mr Woods**—The minister received the report on 30 June last year?

**Senator WILLIAMS**—Did he make it public?

**Mr Woods**—No, he has not.

**Senator WILLIAMS**—Why not?

**Mr Woods**—It is his choice.

**Senator Sherry**—That is a matter for the minister. I will take it on notice and get a response for you.

**Senator WILLIAMS**—The reason why he has not made it public?

**Senator Sherry**—Yes.

**Senator HEFFERNAN**—And when he was going to release it.

**Mr Grant**—Can I just add that the report was referred to four independent investigating agencies to see whether there was a need for further action to be undertaken as a result of that report. So it would be improper for the minister to release a report while those investigations are still being undertaken.

**Senator HEFFERNAN**—Fair enough.

**Senator WILLIAMS**—Will it be released at a later date when these other investigations are out of the road?

**Mr Grant**—That is a matter for the minister to decide on the basis of the—

**CHAIR**—The minister has taken that on notice.

**Senator Sherry**—I will take that notice.

**Answer:**

The report by the Export Wheat Commission into AWB Ltd chartering operations was referred to four independent investigation agencies to determine whether there was a need for further action. The release of the report will be a decision for the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, the Hon Tony Burke MP.