

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates February 2010

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: CSD 01

Division/Agency: Corporate Services Division

Topic: ANAO audit timing

Hansard Page: 9 (08/02/2010)

Senator Colbeck asked:

How recently was the ANAO audit?

Answer:

The ANAO reviews the business continuity arrangements of the department as part of the audit of the department's financial statements each year. The most recent financial statements audit concluded in August 2009.

The results of the 2008/09 audits of financial statements were tabled by the ANAO as follows:

*Interim Phase of the Audit of Financial Statements of General Government
Sector Agencies for the Year ending 30 June 2009 – tabled 22 June 2009*

*Audits of the Financial Statements of Australian Government Entities for the
Period Ended 30 June 2009 –tabled 17 December 2009*

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Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: CSD 02

Division/Agency: Corporate Services Division

Topic: Car-parking and Leases

Hansard Page: 10 (08/02/2010)

Senator Colbeck asked:

Senator COLBECK—And Melbourne?

Ms Hazell—Melbourne was associated with some new leases we signed.

Senator COLBECK—New premises or just new lease?

Ms Hazell—New premises as well—a different location.

Senator COLBECK—So the parking fees in Melbourne have gone from \$25,608 to \$51,359?

Ms Hazell—Yes, Senator.

Senator COLBECK—Is there any sense of what that is a reflection of?

Ms Hazell—I know in part it is a reflection of a new lease in different premises, but for the exact component of that increase that relates to the new lease I would need to take that on notice.

Answer:

In its response to Question on Notice CSD 05 Supplementary Budget Estimates hearing (19 October 2009), the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry provided projections for car-parking costs for 2009/10.

In reviewing the car-parking costs for Brisbane, the department has realised that the original projection of \$68 230 was incorrect. The department sub-lets a number of car-parking spaces in Brisbane and revenue from this arrangement is now factored into the projection. The revised forecast for Brisbane in 2009/10 is \$51 840, which represents a rise of \$1 251 in line with rent increases under leasing arrangements.

In relation to car-parking costs for Melbourne, the previously provided total cost for 2008/09 of \$25 608 inadvertently excluded the AQIS Tullamarine office due to an error by the department's outsourced property provider. The total cost for 2009/10 was \$47 313. The projected cost for 2009/10 of \$55 816 represents a rise of \$8 503 in line with rent increases under leasing arrangements.

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Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: CSD 03

Division/Agency: Corporate Services Division

Topic: Staffing

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Barnett asked:

1. How many permanent staff recruited since the supplementary budget estimates?
2. What level are these staff?
3. How many temporary positions exist or have been created since budget estimates?
4. Since supplementary budget estimates, how many employees have been employed on contract and what is the average length of their employment period?

Answer:

1. Between 19 October 2009 and 8 February 2010 (inclusive) 42 ongoing employees commenced in the department.
2. The levels of these employees were:

APS2	6
APS3	10
APS4	7
APS5	3
APS6	8
EL1	2
EL2	3
SES1	2
SES3	1
3. The department does not create temporary positions, however some positions are filled on a temporary basis.
4. Between 19 October 2009 and 8 February 2010 (inclusive) the department employed 54 non-ongoing employees, of whom 46 were still employed on 8 February 2010. The average length of employment based on commencement date and contract end date was 5.5 months.

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Question: CSD 04

Division/Agency: Corporate Services Division

Topic: Staffing

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Barnett asked:

1. Have staffing numbers been reduced as a result of the efficiency dividend and/or other budget cuts?
2. If so, where and at what level?
3. Are there any plans for staff reduction? If so, please advise details i.e. reduction target, how this will be achieved, services/programs to be cut etc.
4. What changes are underway or planned for graduate recruitment, cadetships or similar programs? If reductions are envisaged please explain including reasons, target numbers etc.

Answer:

- 1, 2 and 3. The information sought was provided in the answer to the Supplementary Budget Estimates Question on Notice CSD 01 from the October 2009 Senate Estimates Hearing.
4. The department's Graduate Development and Traineeship Programs will resume in 2011. Final numbers of graduates and trainees will be decided in the context of the 2010/11 budget.

The department participates in the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations Indigenous cadetship and traineeship programs each year. Four students are completing the Indigenous cadetship program and ten trainees will commence the traineeship program in 2010.

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Question: CSD 05

Division/Agency: Corporate Services Division

Topic: Freedom of Information

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Barnett asked:

1. Has the Department/agency received any advice on how to respond to FOI requests?
2. How many FOI requests has the Department received?
3. How many have been granted or denied?
4. How many conclusive certificates have been issued in relation to FOI requests?

Answer:

1. The *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act) outlines the statutory requirements agencies must meet when responding to requests. The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet has issued guidelines to assist agencies process Freedom of Information (FOI) requests and apply the FOI Act. These guidelines may be found at <http://www.dpmc.gov.au/foi/guidelines.cfm>.
2. Between 1 July 2009 and 8 February 2010, the department received eight FOI requests.
3. Of the eight received:
 - 1 request resulted in full access being granted
 - 3 requests resulted in partial access being granted
 - 1 request was not progressed as no documents were held by the department
 - none have been denied
 - 3 are still being processed.
4. Since 1 July 2009, no conclusive certificates have been issued by the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, or by a principal officer of the department on the minister's behalf.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: CSD 06

Division/Agency: Corporate Services Division

Topic: Consultancy contracts

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Barnett asked:

1. How many consultancies have been undertaken or are underway since November 2007? Please identify the name of the consultant, the subject matter of the consultancy, the duration and cost of the arrangement, and the method of procurement (i.e. open tender, direct source, etc). Please also include total value for all consultancies.
2. How many consultancies are planned for this calendar year? Have these been published in your Annual Procurement Plan (APP) on the AusTender website and if not why not? In each case please identify the subject matter, duration, cost and method of procurement as above, and the name of the consultant if known.

Answer:

1. The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry has entered into 447 consultancies for the period 1 December 2007 to 8 February 2010 at a total cost of \$34 805 150.

Details of the department's consultancy contracts, including descriptions, are available through AusTender, the government's electronic procurement information system at www.tenders.gov.au.

2. The department's Annual Procurement Plan is published on AusTender at the commencement of each financial year and updated throughout the year to provide details of planned approaches to market. As the intent of the Annual Procurement Plan is to draw potential suppliers' attention to procurement opportunities for major projects, the department has focused its plan on anticipated procurements of \$80 000 or more involving an open approach to the market.

The department's 2009-10 APP includes planned approaches to the market for the remainder of 2009-10. The department will shortly commence work on the 2010-11 Annual Procurement Plan, with the aim of publishing the plan before 30 June 2010.

The 2009-10 APP includes eleven consultancies. Of these, three approaches to market are yet to occur as at 8 February 2010. These involve:

- (a) A review of the allocation system for the Cheese and Curd Import Quota Scheme.
- (b) Development of components of a 2nd Pass ICT Business Case.

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Question: CSD 06 (continued)

- (c) A review of the Rural Financial Counselling Program in line with recommendations from the Productivity Commission's Inquiry into Government Drought Support and the Expert Social Panel's report on the social impacts of drought.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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Question: CSD 07

Division/Agency: Corporate Services

Topic: International Travel Undertaken by DAFF Officials

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Colbeck asked:

Can you please provide a list of all international travel undertaken by DAFF officials including:

- Name of official
- Position of official
- Date of travel
- Cost of travel
- Class of airline travel
- Reason for travel
- Countries/cities visited

Answer:

Overseas travel undertaken in 2009-10 is at **Attachment A**.

Departmental officials are entitled to travel business class when travelling for international purposes subject to flight availability.

In some instances, travel costs may be shared with other agencies or external parties. The costs reflected in the attachment reflect those borne by the department only, including airfares, accommodation and other travel related expenditure.

[CSD 07 – Attachment]

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Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: CSD 08

Division/Agency: Corporate Services Division

Topic: Staffing

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Nash asked:

1. What is the total expenditure on staffing for the Department and for all portfolio agencies? (b)What is the SES and non-SES breakdown?
2. What are the current staffing levels for SES and non-SES officers? What is the breakdown by location?
3. What have been the changes in ASL since November 2007? (b)Why have these changes occurred? (c)What have been the Budgetary implications?
4. In the case of reductions in staff numbers, how have these reductions been absorbed by the Department? What functions have been sacrificed and why?
5. Has there been a target for staff reductions to achieve savings? What is that target and what strategy is being implemented to achieve this?
6. Have any voluntary or involuntary redundancies been offered to staff? If so, how have staff been identified for such offers? Are there such plans for the future?

Answer:

1. The payments made to the staff of the portfolio agencies covered by the *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997* (Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Australian Fisheries Management Authority, Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority and Wheat Exports Australia) for the 2009/10 financial year up to 8 February 2010 was \$273 356 351.

This includes all salary, taxable and non-taxable allowances, superannuation and termination payments as well as payments to office holders.

Payments made to SES officers from the above figure totalled \$16 251 959.

The payments made to staff in the portfolio covered by the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997* (Australian Wine and Brandy Corporation, Cotton Research and Development Corporation, Fisheries Research and Development Corporation, Grains Research and Development Corporation, Grape and Wine Research and Development Corporation, Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation and Sugar Research and Development Corporation) for the 2009/10 financial year up to 8 February 2010 is \$15 917 659.

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Question: CSD 08 (continued)

These agencies do not use the APS classification structure and cannot provide an SES and non-SES breakdown.

2. As at 8 February 2010 the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry had a Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staffing of 4340. Ninety four FTE were in SES positions (this includes the Secretary). The location of these employees was:

State	Non-SES	SES	Total
ACT	1633	85	1718
NSW	865	1	866
NT	56	1	57
Qld	653	1	654
SA	191	0	191
Tas	5	0	5
Vic	555	1	556
WA	281	1	282
OS	7	4	11
Total	4246	94	4340

3. a) The change in ASL between November 2007 and 1 February 2010 has been an increase of 24.32 ASL.

b) In response to Question on Notice CSD 08 from the Supplementary Budget Estimates 2009 (19 October 2009), the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry provided this information.

c) Please see response to Question 3(b).

4. In response to Question on Notice CSD 01 from the Supplementary Budget Estimates 2009 (19 October 2009), the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry provided this information.

5. Please see response to Question 4.

6. Yes. Staff were identified for the offers in accordance with relevant provisions of the *Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry Collective Agreement 2009-2011* or the *Meat Program Agreement 2007-2010*.

In the course of implementing the Export Certification Reform process further voluntary redundancies may be offered to staff in accordance with the relevant provisions in the *Meat Program Agreement 2007-2010*.

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Question: CSD 09

Division/Agency: Corporate Services Division

Topic: Consultancy contracts

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Nash asked:

Consultancies

1. How much has the Department spent on consultancy services since November 2007? How can the department justify this expenditure?
2. Could the Department provide a complete list of current consultancy services. For each consultancy, please indicate the rationale for the project and its intended use. For each consultancy, please indicate why the Department or its agencies could not have undertaken the work themselves.

Answer:

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry has entered into 447 consultancies for the period 1 December 2007 to 8 February 2010 at a total cost of \$34,805,150.

The department hires consultants where specialised or professional skills are not available in the department or where there is an identified need for independent research or assessment.

Details of the department's current consultancy contracts, including descriptions, are available through AusTender, the government's electronic procurement information system at www.tenders.gov.au.

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Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: CSD 10

Division/Agency: Corporate Services Division

Topic: Discretionary grants

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Nash asked:

Could the Department provide a list of all discretionary grants, including ad hoc and one-off grants since November 2007?

Please provide details of the recipients, the intended use of the grants and what locations have benefited from the grants.

Answer:

In response to Question on Notice CSD 06 from the Supplementary Budget Estimates 2009 (19 October 2009), the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry provided a list of all discretionary grants from 1 November 2007 to 31 December 2008.

The reporting arrangements for discretionary grants changed from 1 January 2009 with agencies being required to publish the details of all grants with finalised funding deeds, in accordance with government policy.

A list of all grants with finalised funding deeds from 1 January 2009 is available on the department's website at

http://www.daff.gov.au/about/obligations/grants_reporting_requirements.

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Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: CSD 11

Division/Agency: Corporate Services Division

Topic: Hospitality Expenditure

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Barnett asked:

1. What is the Department's hospitality spend FYTD?
2. Please detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events.
3. For each Minister/ Par Sec's office, please detail total hospitality spend FYTD.
4. Please detail date, location, purpose and cost of each event.

Answer:

1. The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry's expenditure on official hospitality from 1 July 2009 to 8 February 2010 was \$47 734.
2. The date, location, purpose and cost of all official hospitality events are at **Attachment A below**.
3. The minister's office did not incur any official hospitality expenditure from 1 July 2009 to 8 February 2010.
4. Not applicable.

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Attachment A

Date of Event	Purpose	Location	Total Cost \$
1/07/2009	Rural Research & Development Council meeting - Dinner	Sydney	839
28/7/2009- 8/8/2009	Australia China Agricultural Cooperation Agreement Dryland Farming Visits	Various	2 084
28/07/2009	New Zealand Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry - Dinner	Adelaide	273
11/08/2009	Statutory Fishing Rights Allocation Review Interview Process - Dinner	Canberra	526
24/08/2009	Industry Cargo Consultative Committee meeting	Canberra	359
26/08/2009	Australia-United States Free Trade Agreement meetings - Catering	Canberra	614
31/08/2009	Dairy Australia - Lunch	Canberra	236
4/09/2009	QLD Regional Management Team - Dinner	Cairns	222
8/09/2009	Signing the MOU between the department and ANU Enterprise Indigenous Land Corporation - Afternoon Tea	Canberra	23
14/09/2009	Science Awards Presentation - Dinner	Canberra	20 472
15/09/2009	Australia & New Zealand Technical Working Group on Animal & Plant Health - Dinner	Canberra	1 421
30/09/2009	Companion Animal Working Group workshop - Dinner	Canberra	569
1/10/2009	United States Department of Agriculture meeting - Lunch	Canberra	19
8/10/2009	China Trade Dialogue project - Lunch	Canberra	152

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Date of Event	Purpose	Location	Total Cost \$
14/10/2009	National BioSIRT Standards Committee meeting - Dinner	Adelaide	757
14/10/2009	Korea National Plant Quarantine Service - Dinner	Jeju - Korea	455
30/10/2009	Forest and Wood Products Council meeting - Lunch	Canberra	435
31/10/2009	Japanese Government Delegations - Refreshments and lunch	Brisbane & Toowoomba	191
1/11/2009	Farmready Reimbursement Grant Program - Morning tea for 5000th grant	Canberra	90
2/11/2009	Indonesian Verification Visit on Australian Food Safety - Lunch & Dinner	Brisbane	2 484
5/11/2009	Bilateral discussions between Biosecurity Group and United States Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service - Dinner	Canberra	503
5/11/2009	United States Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service - Dinner	Canberra	553
5/11/2009	Chilean Officials visit - Lunch	Sydney	146
7/11/2009- 13/11/2009	Australia China Agricultural Cooperation Agreement Sheepmeat Industry Visits	Various	2 272
12/11/2009- 26/11/2009	Australian Biosecurity Award presentations	Various	4 897
18/11/2009	Rural Financial Counselling Service Conference - Lunch	Canberra	238
24/11/2009	Rural Financial Counselling Service Conference - State Government Departments - Lunch	Canberra	275
27/11/2009	Industry Roundtable refreshments and venue hire package	Sydney	2 320
1/12/2009	FarmReady Industry Grant Round 2 Advisory Panel Working group - Lunch	Canberra	90

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Date of Event	Purpose	Location	Total Cost \$
1/12/2009	Importer Forum - Lunch	Canberra	240
1/12/2009	Pollination continuity strategy meeting - Lunch	Canberra	96
3/12/2009	Korean Agriculture delegation and Dept of Primary Industries Tasmania in relation to the verification visit by Korean delegates for Tasmanian cherries to Korea - Dinner.	Hobart	229
7/12/2009	National Residue Survey Laboratory Performance Evaluation Committee meeting - Dinner	Canberra	250
8/12/2009	Korean Free Trades Agreement delegates -Lunch	Canberra	342
9/12/2009	National BioSIRT Development Committee Meeting - Dinner	Canberra	344
10/12/2009	Community Networks and Capacity Building Round of Next Generation Farmers and Recognising Women Farmers delegates- Dinner	Canberra	115
11/12/2009	Community Networks and Capacity Building panel assessment - Lunch	Canberra	234
11/12/2009	Indonesian Verification Visit on Australian Food Safety	Perth	470
11/01/2010	Vietnamese Department of Animal Health - Lunch	Canberra	284
11/01/2010	Japanese Delegation - Australia's export meat establishments and market access to Japan - Dinner	Canberra	552
13/01/2010	Office of the WA Minister for Agriculture - Staff Member - Breakfast	Perth	65
15/01/2010	Drought Planning and Risk Assessment Workshop - Lunch	Canberra	138
20/01/2010	National Rural Advisory Council Meeting - Dinner	Canberra	699
29/01/2010	Stakeholder consultation on Southern Bluefin Tuna matters - Lunch	Canberra	161
			47 734