

**Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

Additional Estimates February 2012

**Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry**

**Question:** 122

**Division/Agency:** APD/GRDC – Agricultural Productivity Division/Grains Research and Development Corporation

**Topic:** Grain Growers Limited Review of ABS / ABARES Data Collection

**Proof Hansard page:** Written

**Senator EDWARDS asked:**

1. How much was the DAFF grant to GGL for the review of the ABS/ABARES data collection?
2. Did GGL contribute any funding for this review? If so, how much?
3. Was there a tender process for this project? If so, can you outline the tender process (including who tendered, the selection criteria and ultimately why GGL were selected)?
4. If there was not a tender process, what were the reasons for the DAFF selecting GGL to undertake this review?
5. GRDC is co-contributing money to this project – how much have they contributed?
6. Was there a requirement for GGL to consult with grain growers in their review? How widely did they consult with grain growers?
7. What has been the deliverables of this review?
8. Was the department presented with a report from GGL on this issue? Has it been released? If not, why?
9. What have been GGL's main recommendations?
10. Has the DAFF received any complaints or comments of this review? If so:
  - a. What were the complaints?
  - b. Who were they from?
  - c. What was the DAFF's response?

**Answer:**

1. The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) funded Grain Growers Ltd (GGL) \$40 000 (GST exclusive) to manage an independent review of the provision of wheat market information to be used by industry to help determine future long-term arrangements.
2. GGL contributed approximately \$3000 (GST exclusive) and significant in-kind contributions including staff time to manage the project, procure an independent consultant and organise an industry roundtable.
3. No

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**Question: 122 (continued)**

4. GGL was judged to have the capacity and capability required to effectively manage the project. GGL conducted a selection process to contract an independent consultant, organised a whole-of-industry round table and managed the delivery of the final report in accordance with the funding agreement.
5. The Grains Research and Development Corporation did not contribute funding to the independent review of the provision of wheat market information project.
6. The funding agreement between DAFF and GGL required ‘...a roundtable discussion with key industry stakeholders to consider the Final Study Report findings and recommendations and to seek industry agreement on future long-term arrangements for the provision of market information’. On 3 August 2011 the roundtable was conducted with 22 industry stakeholders.
7. The deliverables were the assessment of wheat market information needs, the holding of an industry roundtable discussion and the production of a final report.
8. Yes. The report was made publically available on 1 November 2011 on the DAFF website ([www.daff.gov.au/agriculture-food/crops/wheat](http://www.daff.gov.au/agriculture-food/crops/wheat)).
9. Please refer to the answer to Question 8.
10. No.

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**Question:** 123

**Division/Agency:** APD/GRDC – Agricultural Productivity Division/Grains Research and Development Corporation

**Topic:** \$1.35m Project Broadening the Range of Fungicides Available to Cereal and Pulse Growers

**Proof Hansard page:** Written

**Senator EDWARDS asked:**

1. How many tenders have been received for this project?
2. Who has tendered?
3. Has the project been awarded? Will one organisation receive the entirety of the funding available or will it be split amongst a number of organisations?
4. When do tenders close?
5. What does GRDC want to achieve from this project? What are the deliverables?

**Answer:**

1. Five.
2. Tenders were received from a mix of state government departments and commercial companies. The specific details in relation to the tenders are commercial-in-confidence and cannot be disclosed by the Grain Research Development Corporation at this time.
3. No. A decision has not been taken as the tender evaluation process has not been completed.
4. Tenders closed 20 October 2011.
5. This investment aims to reduce the future threat of fungicide shortages and to broaden the range of fungicides with new modes of action. The project will require expertise in the delivery of field pathology and fungicide application trials using a combination of simulated and natural field pathogen infections. The project will be delivered over a three-year period to support the submission of efficacy data to the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority. The objective is to deliver two new pulse and two new cereal fungicide registration packages of new modes of action for use in the Australian grains industry to manage fungicide threats.

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**Question:** 124

**Division/Agency:** APD/GRDC – Agricultural Productivity Division/Grains Research and Development Corporation

**Topic:** GRDC Data Collection – Government’s Response to the Productivity Commission

**Proof Hansard page:** Written

**Senator EDWARDS asked:**

With reference to the Government’s response to Recommendation 7.1 from the Productivity Commission;

1. How does the GRDC respond to this recommendation?
2. Would/could/should the Government act as a facilitator to initiate a new industry data collection mechanism?
3. Is the GRDC aware of any proposals by industry to collect data?
4. What has been the industry’s response to the independent study funded by the DAFF that the Government refer to in their response to Recommendation 7.1?

**Answer:**

1. Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC) has not responded to this recommendation. The government has agreed that the provision of stocks information by state has a significant industry good component and agrees that key beneficiaries should pay for the information. The GRDC and Grain Growers Limited are co-funding continued data collection by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), until September 2012.
2. The government has stated its position that in line with the recommendations of the Productivity Commission, it does not intend to initiate “industry good” functions. However, the government has assisted industry identify possible new data collection mechanisms by funding an independent review of the provision of wheat market information. The review enabled industry to determine possible future arrangements for the continuation of ABS/Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences data collection, and resulted in the arrangements outlined in answer one.
3. As mentioned in answer one, the GRDC and Grain Growers Ltd are co-funding a 12 month data collection project with the ABS.
4. As a result of the independent study and industry round table, industry has established the project outlined above.