

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates February 2013

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 49

Division/Agency: Agricultural Productivity Division/Meat and Livestock Australia

Topic: Breaches of ESCAS

Proof Hansard page: 71

Senator RHIANNON asked:

So to Dr Barnard and Mr Hansen, the question was: has MLA been notified by any of your consultants or the companies that they work for about breaches of ESCAS?

Dr Barnard: As the general manager responsible, I cannot recall a single case—

Senator RHIANNON: Do you want to take it on notice?

Dr Barnard: No; I am prepared to answer it: I cannot recall a single case where a definite breach of ESCAS has been observed by our consultants.

Senator RHIANNON: I would ask if it could go on notice, because just listening to your language it sounds like it needs to be checked.

Answer:

If Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) officers or their consultants were to observe deficiencies in a supply chain, they would notify any shortcomings immediately to those who are responsible for the Exporter Supply Chain Assurance System (ESCAS), and encourage immediate rectification and reporting. MLA has also cooperated fully with all requests from DAFF for information on alleged incidents.

The involvement of MLA in the ESCAS is focussed on supporting the establishment of ESCAS in overseas markets through a number of services including:

- gap analyses undertaken prior to the establishment of an ESCAS-compliant supply chains to identify potential shortcomings prior to an exporter submitting an ESCAS application;
- training and technical advice such as implementation of standard operating procedures, advice on infrastructure design, animal handling and animal processing skills; and
- risk analyses on operational ESCAS-compliant supply chains to identify and address problems before non-compliances occur.

All MLA overseas ESCAS activities are fully funded from industry levies.