

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates February 2014

Agriculture

Question: 57

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

Topic: Gross income for Meat and Livestock Australia

Proof Hansard page: 44

Senator O'SULLIVAN asked:

Senator O'SULLIVAN: Whilst a significant component of MLA's funding comes from levies on the sale and processing of livestock, can you advise the committee of details of any other source of funding, the value of that funding and the percentage that that funding represents relative to the gross income for MLA?

Dr Barnard: I can give you a general answer on that and I will take the specifics on notice.

Answer:

In 2012-13, MLA's total income was \$162.2 million. Producer levies made up 58 per cent of MLA's total revenue in 2012-13. A breakdown of MLA's revenue is bellow:

Revenue source	Amount (%)
Producer levies	
Grass-fed cattle	\$54.2 million (33.4%)
Lamb/mutton	\$31.0 million (19.1%)
Goats	\$0.8 million (0.5%)
Grain-fed cattle	\$7.8 million (4.8%)
Producer levy contribution	\$93.8 million
Processor contributions	\$9.4 million (5.8%)
MLA Donor company	\$9.1 million (5.6%)
Government contributions	\$39.2 million (24.2%)
Other contributions*	\$10.7 million (6.6%)
TOTAL	\$162.2 million

* Live export and co-operative contributions and other sales.

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Agriculture

Question: 58

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

Topic: Staffing levels for Meat and Livestock Australia

Proof Hansard page: 46

Senator FARRELL asked:

Senator FARRELL: What are your current staffing levels?

Dr Barnard: It is about 250, but I would have to take that on notice. I just do not have that figure in my head.

Senator FARRELL: 250 full-time equivalents or—

Dr Barnard: I think, but can I take it on notice?

Senator FARRELL: Sure.

Dr Barnard: That is worldwide, because we have officers overseas as well as in Australia.

Senator GALLACHER: Can we have the dollar value of that employment cost. It is 250, but how much does it cost out of your \$170 million?

Dr Barnard: Can I take that on notice, too?

Answer:

At 30 June 2013, MLA employed 248 full-time equivalent staff.

At 30 June 2013, staff wages and salaries totalled \$24.37million and total employee benefit expenses totalled \$29.46million.

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Agriculture

Question: 59

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

Topic: New markets for live export

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator RHIANNON asked:

1. Through your research and development what new markets have you identified for the export of cattle, sheep and goats in the last and the current financial year?
2. Have you undertake research into identifying markets for live buffalo exports?
3. What work are you undertaking to help to re-establish live exports to Bahrain?
4. How much of your budget in the last and the current financial year has been allocated to helping to re-establish live exports to Bahrain?

Answer:

1. No new markets for livestock exports were identified in this time frame using Research and Development.
2. Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) is the service producer for the cattle, sheep and goat industries. We do not conduct research, development or marketing activities for the buffalo industry.
3. MLA has worked with the Australian Government through the Department of Agriculture to re-establish live exports to Bahrain.
4. Airfares and associated travel expenses covering Bahrain visits totalled approximately 3500 AED (~AUD\$1064).

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Question: 60

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

Topic: Qatar

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator RHIANNON asked:

1. In relation to last year's high mortality shipment on the Livestock Shipping Services vessel the Bader III whereby 4,179 sheep died – reportedly due to heat stress: May I have details of if and when MLA representatives were in Qatar in the period during and/or after this vessel arrived?
2. Did the MLA representative in Qatar at the time report back to MLA management (either officially or informally) that a further 7000 Australian sheep had died upon arrival in Qatar?
 - a. If not 7000, is MLA aware of additional deaths that occurred in the feedlot after arrival?
3. Regardless of whether MLA determined the information to be of a conclusive or inconclusive nature, is MLA or are any MLA consultants aware of suggestions that thousands of sheep from this shipment died subsequently in the Qatari feedlot?

Answer:

1. Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) understands that the Livestock Shipping Services vessel the Bader III discharged its livestock in Qatar during the period 7-9 September 2013. An MLA-funded consultant was in Qatar from 2/9/13 to 5/9/13 beginning pre-Eid festival preparations but left prior to the discharge dates.
2. There was no MLA representative in Qatar during the period 7-9 September 2013.
 - a. MLA is not aware of additional deaths that may have occurred in the Qatar feedlot after this period.
3. MLA is not aware of this information.

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Additional Estimates February 2014

Agriculture

Question: 61

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

Topic: Meat and Livestock Australia consultant in Kuwait

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator RHIANNON asked:

1. Was MLA consultant Geoffrey Beere in Kuwait either prior to or during the Festival of Sacrifice in October 2013?
 - a. What dates was Mr Beere in Kuwait?
2. Was MLA advised by Mr Beere of breaches of ESCAS occurring in Kuwait?
3. Was MLA made aware by any party of breaches of ESCAS occurring in Qatar during the Festival of Sacrifice?
 - a. If so, what information was provided to MLA and what action was subsequently taken?

Answer:

1. Geoffrey Beere is a representative of Amal Services Pty Ltd with which Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) has a consultancy agreement, and was in Kuwait prior to and during Eid.
 - a. Mr Beere was in Kuwait from 24/9/13 to 18/10/13.
2. MLA Consultants are not required to make determinations as to whether breaches have occurred. In the event that Exporter Supply Chain Assurance System (ESCAS) non-conformities are observed by MLA staff or consultants the information is passed on to the exporter/relevant supply chain operator. It is the responsibility of the exporter to report any ESCAS breaches to the Department of Agriculture.
3. MLA Consultants are not required to make determinations as to whether breaches have occurred. In the event that ESCAS non-conformities are observed by MLA staff or consultants the information is passed on to the exporter/relevant supply chain operator. It is the responsibility of the exporter to report any ESCAS breaches to the Department of Agriculture.