

**Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

Budget Estimates May 2006

**Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry**

**Question:** CP 01

**Division/Agency:** Corporate Policy

**Topic:** Questions on Notice

**Hansard Page:** 4 (24/05/06)

**Senator O'Brien asked:**

**Senator O'BRIEN**—You are not able to give us a precise timing for when you got the draft answers to the minister's office. Is that what you just said?

**Ms Hewitt**—I would prefer not to delve into that. If you really want to pursue that, that would be a matter I would want to consult the minister about.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—I do want to pursue that because I do not want to attribute blame to the department if that is not where the blame lies. I think the committee is entitled to know if the department has done its job but someone else has fallen down on theirs. It is not fair if I am criticising the department if the department is not at fault. That is why I am asking the question, and in the past we have had that information.

**Ms Hewitt**—That is certainly not an impression I would want to generate. Could I just reflect on that one and see what information we are able to give you subsequently?

**Answer:**

The questions taken on notice by the Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry (the Department) covered a wide range of issues, some of which required detailed research and extensive consultation between the Department and agencies outside the Department.

Because of the nature and complexities involved, draft responses were prepared by the Department and forwarded to the Minister's office on an ongoing basis from mid-March 2006 to early-May 2006. Following further clarification and consultation with relevant bodies, final responses were forwarded to the Committee from late April through to late May 2006.

Please provide an estimation of hours spent on QON response for each officer involved.

<b>Officer</b>	<b>DAFF Level</b>	<b>Hours spent on QON response</b>
<b>A</b>	SES 1	0.2hrs
<b>B</b>	Level 8	0.2hrs
<b>C</b>		
<b>D</b>		