

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2009

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: QBPU01

Division/Agency: Quarantine and Biosecurity Policy Unit

Topic: Independent Review of Australia's Quarantine and Biosecurity Arrangements

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Nash asked:

Isn't it a fact that the Beale Review into quarantine and bio-security arrangement has cost taxpayers \$1,728,067?

Answer:

No. Refer to Additional Estimates February 2009, Question on Notice, Quarantine and Biosecurity Policy Unit, QBPU 05.

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Budget Estimates May 2009

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: QBPU02

Division/Agency: Quarantine and Biosecurity Policy Unit

Topic: Independent Review of Australia's Quarantine and Biosecurity

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Nash asked:

Isn't it a fact the Beale Review Recommendation 73 states; *The Commonwealth should increase its bio-security investment by an amount in the order of \$260 million per annum, subject to a full costing by departments, to meet the recommendations of this report.*'?

Answer:

Yes. Recommendation 73 can be found on page 210 of the Beale review.

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Budget Estimates May 2009

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: QBPU03

Division/Agency: Quarantine and Biosecurity Policy Unit

Topic: Acceptance of Beale review recommendations

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Nash asked:

Is it a fact that the Minister in a media release announcing the release of the Beale Review stated '*the Rudd Government had accepted all 84 recommendations in-principle*'?.

Answer:

Yes. In a media release posted on the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry's website on 18 December 2008 it was stated that '*the Rudd Government had accepted all 84 recommendations in-principle*'. This media release may be found at: http://www.maff.gov.au/media/media_releases/2008/december/report_proposes_major_overhaul_of_australias_biosecurity_system.

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Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: QBPU04

Division/Agency: Quarantine and Biosecurity Policy Unit

Topic: Independent Review of Australia's Quarantine and Biosecurity

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Nash asked:

Does the Government have any intention of adopting Beale Recommendation 73?

Answer:

The government has accepted all 84 recommendations in-principle. The government has yet to respond in detail to the Beale Review including to the budgetary implications which will be subject to normal budgetary processes.

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Budget Estimates May 2009

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: QBPU05

Division/Agency: Quarantine and Biosecurity Policy Unit

Topic: Independent Review of Australia's Quarantine and Biosecurity

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Nash asked:

What Beale recommendations is the Government adopting in 2009-10? How much will these measures cost to implement? When is it the Government's intention to adopt implement all 84 of the Beale Review Recommendations?

Answer:

The government has accepted all Beale recommendations in principle. Implementing these reforms will take some time and will be subject to normal budget processes.

A number of activities are currently underway. New legislation to replace the *Quarantine Act 1908* is being developed. The Commonwealth, states and territories are developing a national agreement on biosecurity, which will help shape an improved national system.

As noted in the government's preliminary response, a number of interim administrative arrangements have been implemented. From 1 July 2009 an interim Inspector General of Biosecurity has been appointed to audit and verify Australia's biosecurity systems; interim arrangements to enhance the Eminent Scientists Group to include economic expertise have been put in place; and the current pre-border, border and post-border biosecurity functions of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry have been consolidated into a new business unit—the Biosecurity Services Group. The Biosecurity Advisory Council, replacing the Quarantine and Export Advisory Council, will be appointed in 2009 to provide advice to the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry on biosecurity matters across the biosecurity continuum

The Beale Review supported the former government's decision to allow the 40 per cent discount of AQIS export certification functions to lapse at the end of June 2009. New fee schedules have been negotiated with all industry sectors to begin on 1 July 2009. The return to 100 per cent cost recovery on 1 July 2009 for AQIS export certification functions has been completed in close cooperation with industry.

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Budget Estimates May 2009

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: QBPU06

Division/Agency: Quarantine and Biosecurity Policy Unit

Topic: Independent Review of Australia's Quarantine and Biosecurity Arrangements

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Nash asked:

How much did the Beale Review cost?

Answer:

Refer to Additional Estimates February 2009, Question on Notice, Quarantine and Biosecurity Policy Unit05.

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Budget Estimates May 2009

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: QBPU07

Division/Agency: Quarantine and Biosecurity Policy Unit

Topic: Independent Review of Australia's Quarantine and Biosecurity Arrangements

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Nash asked:

Please provide a breakdown of all individual costs

Answer:

Refer to Additional Estimates February 2009, Question on Notice, Quarantine and Biosecurity Policy Unit 05.

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Budget Estimates May 2009

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: QBPU08

Division/Agency: Quarantine and Biosecurity Policy Unit

Topic: Independent Review of Australia's Quarantine and Biosecurity

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Nash asked:

What is the Government's timetable for responding formally to the Beale Review?

Answer:

The government's preliminary response to the Beale Review indicated timing for a range of interim arrangements. Refer also to Budget Estimates May 2009, QBPU05.

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Budget Estimates May 2009

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: QBPU09

Division/Agency: Quarantine and Biosecurity Policy Unit

Topic: Independent Review of Australia's Quarantine and Biosecurity

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Nash asked:

When will legislation be introduced?

Answer:

New legislation, to replace the *Quarantine Act 1908*, is expected to be introduced into Parliament in 2010.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2009

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: QBPU10

Division/Agency: Quarantine and Biosecurity Policy Unit

Topic: Independent Review of Australia's Quarantine and Biosecurity

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Nash asked:

Who has the Government consulted within industry on the Beale Reviews recommendations?

Answer:

The independent panel consulted widely with interested organisations in Australia and overseas. In total, the panel consulted directly with 170 individuals and representatives of organisations and received approximately 220 written submissions.

Since the December 2008 release of the panel's report and the government's preliminary response, there has been continuing consultation with industry on a wide range of issues in the Beale Review.

Minister Burke has met with representatives from the Australian Meat Industry Council, the Australian Livestock Exporters' Council, Australian Lotfeeders' Association, Cattle Council of Australia, Horticulture Australia Council, National Aquaculture Council, Grain Trade Australia, National Herd Improvement Association of Australia, Australian Dairy Farmers, Sheepmeats Council of Australia, Biological Farmers of Australia, Commonwealth Fisheries Association, Red Meat Advisory Council. The Minister has also met and had phone discussions with a number of other individuals and organisations.

A list of industry consultations conducted by the department since January 2009 is **attached**.

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Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: QBPU11

Division/Agency: Quarantine and Biosecurity Policy Unit

Topic: Independent Review of Australia's Quarantine and Biosecurity

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Nash asked:

Has industry welcomed all aspects of the Beale Review? Are there any alternative views within industry on any recommendations, particularly in relation to market access arrangements and establishing new markets, particularly import protocols in relation to quarantine matters including cost?

Answer:

Overall, industry has been very welcoming of the Beale Review recommendations. There has been significant media coverage and ministerial correspondence regarding a range of industry views on specific recommendations.

The government is consulting extensively with industry and other relevant stakeholders in progressing the government's response to the Beale review recommendations.

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Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: QBPU12

Division/Agency: Quarantine and Biosecurity Policy Unit

Topic: Independent Review of Australia's Quarantine and Biosecurity

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Nash asked:

Is the government reviewing it's 'in principle support' for any of the Beale Review recommendations?

Answer:

No. Refer to Additional Estimates February 2009 Question on Notice, Quarantine and Biosecurity Policy Unit10.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2009

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: QBPU13

Division/Agency: Quarantine and Biosecurity Policy Unit

Topic: Independent Review of Australia's Quarantine and Biosecurity

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Nash asked:

What is the Government's estimated cost of implementing the Beale Review Recommendations? (Please provide a breakdown, including any additional costs and/or savings)

Answer:

Refer to Additional Estimates February 2009 Question on Notice, Quarantine and Biosecurity Policy Unit11.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2009

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: QBPU14

Division/Agency: Exports Division/ Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service

Topic: AQIS

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Nash asked: Given the Government's 'in principle support' has it acted on recommendation 79 which states;

79 Export certification functions should return to 100 per cent cost recovery as scheduled at the beginning of July 2009, noting that this would require an early decision and announcement by the Government to allow businesses to prepare for the additional costs as well as for the necessary consultation on revised fee structures.

Answer:

The steps and processes necessary to return the export industries to 100 per cent cost recovery by 1 July 2009 have been put in place.

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Budget Estimates May 2009

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: QBPU15

Division/Agency: Exports Division/ Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service

Topic: AQIS

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Nash asked: Provide a breakdown of what it will cost each affected industry per annum to implement recommendation 79?

Answer:

The budgeted funding expected for the 40 per cent export subsidy for each export industry in 2008-09 is provided in the table below; this will represent the costs to each affected industry if exports occur at similar levels to 2008/09.

40% export contribution (\$'000)	
	2008/09⁽¹⁾
Grain Export Program	4,252
Horticulture Export Program	2,590
Live Animal Export Program	2,093
Organic Foods Export Program	87
Dairy Export Program	840
Fish Export Program	2,156
Meat Export Program	31,411
Total	43,428

⁽¹⁾ Represents budgeted funding expectations in 2008/09

Attachment A – The breakdown of export assistance for each industry during 2005/06 to 2007/08.

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Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: QBPU16

Division/Agency: Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service

Topic: AQIS

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Nash asked:

Has the Government received any industry responses to this recommendation? If so what were they?

Answer:

The Minister and the Department have received numerous items of correspondence with differing views in relation to the return to 100 per cent cost recovery.

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Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: QBPU17

Division/Agency: Quarantine and Biosecurity Policy Unit

Topic: Independent Review of Australia's Quarantine and Biosecurity

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Nash asked:

Does the Government still give 'in principled support' to recommendation 59 of the Beale Review which in part states; 'The panel's view is that access to positive control samples such as the FMD virus is vital and should be permitted ... to approved laboratories and to AAHL?'

Answer:

Refer to Additional Estimates February 2009 Question on Notice, Quarantine and Biosecurity Policy Unit12.