

**Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry (AGFO)**  
**Government Response –**  
**Treading Water: The impact of and response to the 2021 British Columbia floods,**  
**March 21, 2024**

**QUESTION**

**Senator Robinson:** Ms. El Bied, I had a question as a follow up to Senator Burey’s question. I didn’t understand, when speaking about the DFAA program that’s coming out, were farmers, ranchers and processors directly consulted in the building of that? You mentioned the PTs were consulted. I’m wondering if the actual producers, ranchers, farmers and processors were consulted.

**Ms. El Bied:** I will need to take that question back and send a written follow-up response, if you don’t mind, senator. I need to confirm and don’t want to mislead anyone with the answer.

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**ANSWER**

- The engagement undertaken for the modernization of the DFAA took place over several years, and included extensive engagement with PTs, discussions with international counterparts, and an expert Advisory Panel stood up to review and provide strategic recommendations on the program (that included participation from PTs and National Indigenous organizations, academics, and other experts). With PTs, PS conducted intensive interviews with each PT on the existing DFAA and its challenges, held in-person workshops in 12 PT capitals to discuss the modernized program, hosted an online forum where PTs could post comments and engage on specific topics, conducted a significant number of virtual meetings as well as engaged with FPT governance systems such as Senior Officials Responsible for Emergency Management, as well as DM and MIN-level committees.
- On agricultural issues specifically:
  - The DFAA Modernization team heard directly from several PTs, many of whom brought representatives from their agricultural departments and agencies, about some of the barriers and challenges faced by the agricultural sector following disasters, with key topics including the limiting definition of ‘small business’ in the current program (the revenue cap and ownership requirements, in particular); the limitations on eligibility for some types of expenses such as uninsurable crops, seeds, fertilizer, etc.; and the impacts of recurrent disasters. These challenges were a feature of written feedback as well as a key topic during the workshops with PTs.
  - Our elected and senior officials also received letters from PTs that highlighted some of the challenges for the agricultural sector.
  - Our team met with the National Canadian Cattle Association to hear directly about their experiences post disaster (especially following the 2021 BC atmospheric river) and the barriers to accessing support.

- Our team had multiple meetings with representatives from the Department of Agriculture to talk specifically about the intersection between the DFAA and programs such as Agri-Stability, Agri-Insurance, and Agri-Recovery, that are designed to support the agricultural sector.