

Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee

Inquiry into the Impact of Defence Training Activities and Facilities on Rural and Regional Communities – 8 June 2017

ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Defence

Topic: Attendance at Community Contract Information Sessions

Question reference number: 3

Senator: Gallacher

Type of question: asked on Thursday 8 June 2017, Hansard page 25

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 22 June 2017

Question:

Senator BACK: Very briefly, what will stages 1 and 2 deliver? I do not want to take too much of your time.

Brig. Beutel: I will just quickly go through some of the community consultation aspects of it as far as the Cultana expansion is concerned and then I will jump into what Cultana 1 and Cultana 2 are, and I can provide you with detail about where we are at with the contracting for Cultana stage 1. I am also happy to talk about Woomera. We have a recently parliamentary approved project there. In relation to community consultation, particularly around the Cultana expansion, it was consultation predominantly with Port Augusta and Whyalla communities. In July 2014, Defence hosted the Cultana expansion ceremony in Whyalla to acknowledge the signing of what is referred to as the Miscellaneous Lease for Defence Purposes. The ceremony that was conducted there also provided local communities with information regarding the development of the expanded Cultana training area and related contract opportunities, as they were at that time. Following that meeting, a number of inquiries were subsequently submitted to the then Assisting Minister for Defence, Darren Chester, and also the Minister for Defence, Marise Payne. These came from the centre manager of the Westfield shopping centre and also a Mr Brenton French, who is an adjoining landowner from Cultana. They asked questions about ongoing contract opportunities. That was formally responded to by Minister Chester in a public letter. About a month or so after that, on 27 August 2014 Mr Rowan Ramsey MP, the member for Grey, also got in contact with the Assistant Minister for Defence and also some of my people in regard to having a meeting to further discuss contracting opportunities at the Cultana Training Area. At that meeting Defence agreed to conduct community contract information sessions at Whyalla and Port Augusta in late 2014, which was subsequently done.

CHAIR: Were they well attended? Do you have the details about attendance?

Brig. Beutel: I would have to take that on notice. Defence conducted those information sessions at Whyalla and Port Augusta councils on 18 and 19 November respectively, with Mr Ramsey opening each session at his request. Again, if you wish,

I can provide to this committee today a copy of the presentation that we provided to those two information sessions.

Answer:

Attendance at Whyalla and Port Augusta information sessions for the Cultana expansion was high with approximately 100 attendees at each session, including potential vendors and contractors.