

**Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**Transport and Regional Services**

Department of Transport and Regional Services

24 August 2005

**Question Numbers:** JSC 01 – JSC 06.

**Reference:** Norfolk Island governance

**Public hearing:** Thursday, 4 August 2005

**Output:** Territories and Local Government

**JSC 01 Senator O'Brien (p4)**

What contribution has the Department of Transport and Regional Services made to the costs associated with the visits by officials from the Australian Taxation Office, Department of Finance and Administration, the Australian Bureau of Statistics and Treasury?

**Answer**

The Department contributed the following funds to the May 2005 visit of officers from Treasury, Australian Taxation office and the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

<b>Item</b>	<b>\$</b>
Meals	393.50
Accommodation	1,551.00
Vehicle hire	450.20
Airfares	5,249.53
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,644.23</b>

**JSC 02 CHAIRMAN (p16)**

What natural disaster relief would the Australian Government provide to the community of Norfolk Island in the event of such a disaster?

**Answer**

Primary responsibility for the protection of life and property in Australia as a consequence of natural, technological and human caused disasters rests with state and territory governments. The Norfolk Island Government (NIG) therefore has primary responsibility for natural disaster mitigation, response and relief measures to address the impact of natural disasters on Norfolk Island.

The Australian Government through the Natural Disaster Relief Arrangements (NDRA) provides partial re-imbusement to state and territory governments for relief expenditure when that expenditure exceeds specified thresholds. The NIG is not covered by the NDRA.

Any request for disaster relief from the NIG in the event of a natural disaster affecting the Island would be a matter for the Australian Government's consideration.

**JSC 03 CHAIRMAN (p21)**

Who provided the reference to the Commonwealth Grants Commission for its Inquiry into Norfolk Island in 1997?

Answer

The terms of reference for the Commonwealth Grants Commission Inquiry "Report on Norfolk Island 1997" were referred to the Commission by the then Minister for Administrative Services, the Hon David Jull MP as Minister with responsibility for the *Commonwealth Grants Commission Act 1973*.

The Inquiry was conducted pursuant to section 16C of the *Commonwealth Grants Commission Act 1973*:

*16C Inquiries relating to Norfolk Island*

**JSC 04 CHAIRMAN (p23)**

Would DOTARS make the minutes of the June 2005 KAVHA management board meeting available to the Committee?

Answer

The minutes have not yet been accepted by Board members. This will occur at the next meeting scheduled for 14 October on Norfolk Island. At that stage Board members will be consulted on the request by the Joint Standing Committee.

**JSC 05 CHAIRMAN (p26)**

Is there any Commonwealth legislative framework that would trigger financial support for the Norfolk Island Government in the event of the Norfolk Island Government facing insolvency?

Answer

No. This would be a matter for the consideration of the Australian Government in consultation with the Norfolk Island Government.

**JSC 06 Senator Hogg (p27)**

Medivacs from the Indian Ocean Territories (IOTs) are paid from what source?

Answer

Medivacs from the IOTs to the mainland are met from Indian Ocean Territories Health Service (IOTHS) budget. These funds are appropriated to the Department of Transport and Regional Services as part of the 'Services to the Indian Ocean Territories' administered programme, and is part of the health services funded by the Australian Government in the IOTs.