

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO
2015-16 Additional Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: 5.2 National Disability Insurance Scheme Question No: SQ16-000132

Topic: Sector Development Fund

Hansard page: Written

Senator Carol Brown asked:

Does the Department consult the Agency on SDF project applications? Who makes the final decision? Is it the Minister? Please explain this process.

Answer:

Yes, where a project proposal includes functions already being undertaken by the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA), we seek their input as to the merit of the proposal to ensure there is no duplication or contradiction in relation to work they are undertaking. The NDIA is also able to bring forward project proposals for funding through the Sector Development Fund (the Fund) on the same basis as any other entity.

The Minister for Social Services is responsible for the Fund. Decisions relating to the allocation of funds has been delegated to the Deputy Secretary, Disabilities and Housing, Department of Social Services (DSS).

No, decisions to allocate funding are made by the delegate unless the proposed project is \$10 million or over, or of a sensitive nature such as a large open selection process. The Specialist Disability Accommodation Initiative was approved by the Minister as the proposed funding was \$10 million.

When considering project proposals, DSS looks at whether the proposal aligns with the Fund outcomes. Consideration is also given to: whether the proposal is value for money; whether it duplicates any completed or current projects; whether it duplicates work being undertaken by the NDIA or state governments as part of transition; and whether it has national application or could be replicated.

When a project proposal is to be recommended for funding, a minute is developed for consideration by the delegate. The minute outlines the proposal, how it aligns with the Fund outcomes (and the Market Sector and Workforce Strategy if applicable) and, how the project will be managed together with the timeframes. Consideration is given to the availability of funds and the value for money of the proposal.