



Australian Government

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

ONE NATIONAL CIRCUIT
BARTON

Ms Lyn Beverley
Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Ms Beverley

I wish to advise of the following corrections to the record in relation to evidence provided at the Additional Estimates hearings on 8, 12 and 22 February 2016 regarding the Prime Minister and Cabinet portfolio.

Monday 8 February 2016

1. On page 138 of the Proof Hansard, Mr Fox wishes to correct the statement, as follows:

Mr Fox: I think, as the secretary of the immigration department said to the Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee this morning, the document was described as a pre-exposure draft. It was prepared by officials for an interdepartmental committee. So it ~~might~~ would not in fact have been lodged as a cabinet document at that time. That is what it appeared from the document that was reported in the media.

Friday 12 February 2016

2. On page 35 of the Proof Hansard, Ms Stuart-Fox wishes to correct the statement, as follows:

CHAIR: Are the contracts that are quoted on AusTender all the contracts that have been awarded under this policy?

Ms Stuart-Fox: No. That is right. So it is likely to be much higher than that. These are just contracts that are registered with AusTender. In addition, what we count towards our target and what agencies are currently ~~negotiating~~ reporting are contracts below \$10,000, which are not registered on AusTender. Also, subcontracts can count. That is very important. Where we have head contracts and we work with the head contractor to get them to subcontract some of the work to Indigenous businesses, those contracts are not registered on AusTender. So it is likely that that \$36 million, which is the current figure that we have, is a significant underestimate of the value of Commonwealth business with Indigenous businesses.

3. On page 19 of the Proof Hansard, Mr Roche wishes to correct the statement, as follows:

In relation to private ownership, I am pleased to report that last week we concluded an agreement with the Northern Territory Department of Housing, which now sets out a process for the sale and transfer of public housing into private hands. This is, of course, dependent upon the individuals concerned satisfying ~~ABA~~ IBA and the Northern Territory government of their capacity to pay and undergoing appropriate training. On the housing front we are also looking at assisting our local traditional owner corporations, both on the Tiwi Islands and

Groote, in their efforts to build homes, bid for repairs and maintenance tenders, and investigate alternative ways of managing housing stock.

4. On pages 58 and 59 of the Proof Hansard, the following was stated:

Senator Scullion: The refresh of the board was to also include some independent directors, as we spoke about earlier. I might have to take the numbers of notice, but it was my intention to be able to remove the chairperson. We currently have seven members from the land councils: five members from the Central Land Council, one member from the Tiwis and one member from Anindilyakwa. That is the current circumstance. We are working with the board to ensure that we have the addition of, I think, two independent individuals.

...

Senator Scullion: No, it is in consultation with the Aboriginal Benefits Trust Account. The land councils already have the funds provided to them under another section of the act. This is not to do with the land councils. The land councils of course nominate people. We will be consulting with the Aboriginal Benefits Trust Account board, and of course the land councils will have a say in those matters because they nominate individuals.

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet wishes to clarify the above evidence, as follows:

The Aboriginals Benefit Account (ABA) Advisory Committee currently consists of a Chair appointed by the Minister for Indigenous Affairs, Senator the Hon Nigel Scullion (Minister) and 14 members elected by the four Northern Territory Land Councils. Members comprise:

- 7 from the Northern Land Council,
- 5 from the Central Land Council,
- 1 from the Anindilyakwa Land Council; and
- 1 from the Tiwi Land Council.

The term of the current Chair of the Committee, Mrs Patricia Brahim, will expire on 30 June 2016. An Expression of Interest (EOI) process is being conducted by the Department, to identify a suitably qualified candidate for the position of Chair from 1 July 2016.

Under subsection 65(4) of the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976*, the Minister is able to appoint up to two members to the Committee who have demonstrated expertise in land management, or business or financial management. An EOI process is being conducted to identify up to two members with expertise in land management or business or financial management (Independent Members) for appointment to the Committee.

To pursue possible efficiencies in the operation of the Committee, the Minister wrote to the Land Councils in August 2014, seeking their views on possible reductions. No decision has been taken to reduce the size of the Committee.

Yours sincerely

1. Paula Ganly
First Assistant Secretary
Ministerial Support Division

15 March 2016