

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
Additional Estimates 2016 - 2017

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

**Department/Agency:** Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet  
**Outcome/Program:** Outcome 2: Indigenous  
**Topic:** Groote Eylandt Regional Partnership Agreement

**Senator:** Siewert, Rachel

**Question reference number:** 228

**Type of question:** Written

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** 13 April 2017

**Number of pages:** 2

**Question:**

What is the current status of the Groote RPA?

- If the RPA has ceased, when did it cease?
- What was the basis for its cessation?
- Who made the decision to cease supporting the RPA?
- How much did the Commonwealth contribute to the RPA over its life?
- How much did the local Groote community contribute to the RPA over its life?

**Answer:**

The Groote Eylandt and Bickerton Island Regional Partnership Agreement (the Agreement) Stage 1 was signed on 28 May 2008 and included provisions to negotiate a Stage 2 which would replace and build on Stage 1 of the Agreement. The Parties to Stage 1 were the Commonwealth Government, the Northern Territory Government and the Anindilyakwa Land Council.

The Groote Eylandt and Bickerton Island Regional Partnership Agreement Stage 2 was signed on 10 November 2009. The East Arnhem Shire Council and the Groote Eylandt Mining Company joined as Parties to the Agreement.

The duration of the Agreement was for five years from the date of signing. The term of the Agreement ended on 9 November 2014.

The Regional Partnership Committee considered the need for a Stage 3 of the Agreement but decided it was not required.

The financial commitment initially estimated for Stages 1 and 2 combined was anticipated to be over \$80 million, with \$20 million committed to sealing the Angurugu to Umbakumba Road and \$60 million invested in housing under the Strategic Indigenous Housing and Infrastructure Program. The total amount invested by all Parties was approximately \$140 million. The Commonwealth Government contributed around \$100 million to a number of major infrastructure projects and social programmes.

The Commonwealth Government provided a dedicated secretariat to the Regional Partnership Committee for the life of the Agreement from the departmental operating budget within the Indigenous Affairs portfolio.

The Anindilyakwa Land Council, on behalf of the Warnindilyakwa Traditional Owners of Groote Eylandt and Bickerton Island, originally committed up to \$14 million in royalty equivalent income towards RPA projects. However, during the life of the Agreement additional contributions were made by the Land Council to augment or enhance specific projects as required.