

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Communications and The Arts
Legislation Committee**

Answers to questions on notice

Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts portfolio

Budget Estimates, May 2009

Outcome:	5	Question No:	218
Program:	5.2		
Division/Agency:	Heritage		
Topic:	Heritage funding		
Hansard Page ECA:	53 (27/5/09)		

Senator LUDLAM asked:

Senator LUDLAM—I wonder whether it is possible, obviously on notice—I would not ask you to do this on the back of an envelope now—to provide us with figures that we could compare with previous years' funding. The last time we spoke I think I pointed out that funding has been declining in the medium term for heritage protection at the Commonwealth level for quite a period of time. This makes it difficult to establish whether that trend is reversed or whether it has stayed in the same place.

Ms Kruk—If we can take that on board we will try to give you some meaningful figures, but I reaffirm, as Mr Shevlin has indicated, we have been fortunate enough to have a significant injection of capital, so we have done well. But I take your question on board and we will give you that information.

Answer/s:

There has been no reduction in the direct departmental budget allocation for the Heritage Division between 2008-09 and 2009-10

The figure of \$20.332 million for 2008-09 on page 77 of the Portfolio Budget Statement is comprised of an appropriation of \$18.521 million, and revenue from other sources of \$1.811 million. The figure of \$14.774 million for 2009-10 comprises an appropriation amount only.

The difference between the reported numbers of \$18.521 million in 2008-09 and \$14.774 million in 2009-10 reflects a reduction in the notional allocation of corporate overhead costs for the Heritage Division. This change is due to a redistribution of these costs as a result of growth in other Outcomes. Other Divisions have also experienced changes in allocations.

The corporate overhead relates to the cost of operating the departmental executive and corporate divisions. As there is no specific outcome covering these corporate expenses, the cost is allocated notionally across all Outcomes and divisions. As it is a notional allocation, there is no real reduction in the corporate support or direct departmental budget allocation provided to the Heritage Division.

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Budget Estimates, May 2009

Outcome:	5.	Question No:	219
Program:	5.2		
Division/Agency:	Heritage		
Topic:	Stimulus package funding – heritage		
Hansard Page ECA:	54 (27/5/09)		

Senator LUDLAM asked:

Senator LUDLAM—This might be more sensible to put to the minister. The stimulus package funding was meant to stimulate the economy rather than being absorbed into the Public Service, with respect. Would that 2.9 per cent administrative cost for heritage funding been subtracted from other parts of the stimulus package?

Senator Carr—I would have to take that on notice.

Senator LUDLAM—It is a very cross-portfolio question, but could you tell us whether three per cent of the whole stimulus package ended up being absorbed into administration costs or whether that is peculiar to this portfolio?

Senator Carr—I will have to take that on notice.

Answers:

We do not hold information on the percentage of stimulus package funding that has been set aside for administrative costs for each portfolio. This question will need to be directed to the respective portfolios administering components of the Jobs Fund:

- Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
- Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government
- Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

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Outcome:	5.	Question No:	220
Program:	5.2		
Division/Agency:	Heritage		
Topic:	Stimulus package funding – heritage		
Hansard Page ECA:	55 (27/5/09)		

Senator LUDLAM asked:

Ms Kruk—Is your question: is there such a list, or are you suggesting that there be such a list?

Senator LUDLAM—I think we established that there is a list. I am just wondering why it would not be in the public domain, or if there is an intention to make it so.

...

Senator LUDLAM—That is fine. The logic appears to be sound. Nothing I have heard this afternoon suggests that anybody has got anything to hide but we do not know whether, when the minister is cutting the ribbon, that has been completely side-stepping the process which sounds quite robust and has invited the right people's opinions. We have no idea whether any of that work is incorporated in the final spend, and I think that is a fairly fundamental—

Ms Kruk—I have heard your question. We will take that on notice.

Answers:

The short list of applications for funding under the heritage component of the Jobs Fund is not a public document. Details of projects that receive funding will be placed on the website of the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts within seven business days of the Funding Agreement being signed.

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Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts portfolio

Budget Estimates, May 2009

Outcome:	5.	Question No:	221
Program:	5.2		
Division/Agency:	Heritage Division		
Topic:	National Heritage management plans: ref Qon 115 SBE		
Hansard Page ECA:	57 (27/5/09)		

Senator LUDLAM asked:

Senator LUDLAM—I put a couple of questions on notice at the session in February. Answers were subsequently provided, but they were somewhat deficient in some cases, so I will just step through a couple of them if I could. Question on notice No. 115 says: At page 12 there is mention of a review of National Heritage management plans. When will this review be completed and will it be made public? There was not any information provided about when that review would be made public, so I am just wondering if you can help us out there?

...

Senator LUDLAM—It sounds like a supremely worthwhile endeavour. I am still puzzled as to why the review would not be made public.

Mr Tucker—We will take some advice on its release. Part of it might be the way in which we ask questions of people. We might have given them a commitment that it was going to be an internal working document and it would be kept confidential, in a sense to encourage them to be as open as possible. We will take some advice on that and see what we can do.

Answer:

The results of an internal survey of the efficacy of management plans for 10 representative places across the National, Commonwealth and World Heritage Lists were discussed at a meeting of the Australian Heritage Council on 4 March 2009. Managers and owners of heritage places who took part in the survey were advised that the information they provided would be kept confidential and used only to compile aggregate information. This approach was taken to encourage frank feedback on the usefulness of management plans.

Key issues from the survey include the:

- cost of preparing management plans;
- limited funding available from the Department to assist in preparing management plans;
- complex process required in preparing management plans; and
- degree to which the requirements for management plans are process-focussed rather than outcome-focussed.

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Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts portfolio

Budget Estimates, May 2009

Outcome:	5	Question No:	222
Program:	5.2		
Division/Agency:	Heritage Division		
Topic:	Heritage listings – Port Arthur buffer zone		
Hansard Page ECA:	62 (27/5/09)		

Senator ABETZ asked:

Senator ABETZ—How wide is the buffer zone?

Mr Shevlin—Buffer zones can vary significantly depending on the nature of a site.

Senator ABETZ—What is being proposed for Port Arthur?

Mr Shevlin—I do not have the details. I can take that one on notice.

Answers:

The detail of the buffer zone, including its size, has yet to be finalised. This work, including community consultation, is being undertaken by the Tasmanian Government and the Tasman Council.

The proposed buffer zone for Port Arthur Historic Site would be implemented through the Tasman Planning Scheme. The Tasmanian State Government, in conjunction with the Tasman Council, is currently developing a buffer zone that aims to assist in managing the potential World Heritage values of the site. The Tasmanian Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment will be consulting further with property owners on the development of the proposed buffer zone and the amendments to the Tasman Planning Scheme.

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Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts portfolio

Budget Estimates, May 2009

Outcome:	5.	Question No:	223
Program:	5.2		
Division/Agency:	Heritage Division		
Topic:	Richmond Bridge, TAS – draft plan		
Hansard Page ECA:	63 (27/5/09)		

Senator ABETZ asked:

Senator ABETZ— I would like to ask you about the 2008 draft plan. Was it dated 2008 or did you receive it in 2008 and how does that relate to what I was referring to earlier as the 1997 conservation plan?

Mr Shevlin—To be honest, I do not have that level of detail.

Senator ABETZ—You can take that on notice for me.

...

Senator ABETZ—If you have concluded that the conservation plan of 1997, with a few adjustments, would be sufficient, have those plans or guidelines been used to manage the bridge to date? We have a plan, but is that being implemented as we speak or is it still a bit of paper without any practical application?

Mr Shevlin—I would like to look at it in its entirety and check the details.

Answers:

The draft conservation management plan reviewed by the Department is dated April 2008. It was received by the Department in May 2008. The draft plan is a substantial update of the 1997 conservation management plan and incorporates policies to manage the National Heritage values as gazetted in November 2005, when the bridge was included in the National Heritage List.

The Department has been informed that policies in the 1997 conservation management plan will continue to be used to manage Richmond Bridge until the draft conservation management plan prepared in 2008 is finalised.

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Outcome:	5	Question No:	224
Program:	5.2		
Division/Agency:	Heritage Division		
Topic:	Richmond Bridge, TAS – draft plan		
Hansard Page ECA:	63 (27/5/09)		

Senator ABETZ asked:

Senator ABETZ—One of the recommendations in the 1997 plan was that the load limit be reduced from 25 tonnes to 15 tonnes, but as I understand it that has not been done. Has your department undertaken any studies or assumed any load limits for it when the decision was made to include it on the National Heritage list?

Mr Shevlin—I know we have provided some assistance for some engineering studies in relation to the bridge. Let me take that on notice.

Senator ABETZ—I understand there was that 2008 report that did express doubts about the load limit of 25 tonnes. I would appreciate it if you could make a comment about that. Was a laser scan made of the bridge in 2007? Are you able to shed any light on that?

Mr Shevlin—I certainly read something suggesting there was a laser scan. I am not sure that that was not what we funded. I will take that on notice.

Senator ABETZ—Can you tell me who funded that and also the results of that scan and whether they have helped inform the management plan details?

Answers:

The Tasmanian Government has jurisdiction over load limits on Richmond Bridge. The Department has not undertaken studies of load limits or assumed any load limits for the bridge. The Department is aware of concerns over vehicle traffic across the bridge and formally wrote to the Tasmanian Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources (DIER) in July 2007 to express concern over various vehicle issues, including loading. A review of the April 2008 draft conservation management plan by the Department found deficiencies in the policies relating to managing vehicle traffic. These concerns were forwarded to DIER in June 2008.

The draft conservation management plan prepared for Richmond Bridge in April 2008 discusses the recommendation of a structural assessment contained in the 1997 conservation management plan that the existing load limit be reduced to 15 tonnes, and contrasts this with the results of a structural assessment commissioned by the Tasmanian Government in 2001 that found that a 25 tonne load limit was likely to be a safe capacity. The April 2008 draft management plan points out the discrepancy in the structural assessments, notes that the 25 tonne load limit may be stressing the bridge, and calls for vibration monitoring to be put in place. A laser scan has been undertaken of the bridge, partly funded by the Department through a grant provided to DIER in 2007.

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The laser scan provided a very accurate three-dimensional model of the structure of Richmond Bridge. While the laser scan is not a structural assessment, it has provided useful baseline information about the bridge. This information has been included in the April 2008 draft conservation management plan and will assist with the management of the bridge.

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Budget Estimates, May 2009

Outcome:	5.	Question No:	225
Program:	5.2		
Division/Agency:	Heritage Division		
Topic:	Cape York Peninsula – World Heritage Listing		
Hansard Page ECA:	70 (27/5/09)		

Senator BOSWELL asked:

Senator BOSWELL—No, I am not asking about what has happened in the media. I am asking: who has put forward a recommendation to the department for a listing?

....

Ms Kruk—Mr Shevlin can take that on notice. I have seen only media reports where it has been suggested that the Wilderness Society has put forward the proposition. But, since Mr Shevlin is struggling, he obviously needs to check to see what request we have received.

Senator BOSWELL—Could you take on notice whether Imogen Zethoven or Aila Keto in any way have made a recommendation?

Mr Shevlin—We will take that on notice.

Answer:

The Department has no record of a recommendation from Aila Keto or Imogen Zethoven regarding a World Heritage nomination of Cape York Peninsula.

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Budget Estimates, May 2009

Outcome:	5	Question No:	226
Program:	5.2		
Division/Agency:	Heritage Division		
Topic:	Regional National Heritage Program		
Hansard Page ECA:	Written Question on Notice		

Senator BIRMINGHAM asked:

1. Did the Department conduct an evaluation of the Regional Natural Heritage Program which concluded in 2006-07?
2. If so, can this evaluation be provided?
3. If not, what was the Department's view of the success or otherwise of this program?

Answer/s:

1. No. All funds under the programme have been committed but some components of the program are yet to be concluded.
2. Please see response to Part 1.
3. Through the RNHP Australia has provided leadership in fostering biodiversity conservation skills within the region. The RNHP was successful in providing over \$9 million in funding to support 51 projects across South East Asia and the Pacific. The funding break down over the four years was:
 - \$820,000 for nine projects in 2003-04
 - \$4.350 million for 15 projects in 2004-05
 - \$1.002 million for six projects in 2005-06
 - \$2.9 million for 21 projects in 2006-07.

The program has yet to be evaluated. However, a number of projects have demonstrated excellent outcomes in gaining community support, and in working successfully in partnerships with NGOs and community organisations. Many projects were also successful in leveraging additional support from other donors.