

**Senate Economics Legislation Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
Industry, Tourism and Resources Portfolio  
Additional Estimates 2004-2005, 16 February 2005

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**AGENCY/DEPARTMENT:** DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY, TOURISM AND RESOURCES  
**OUTCOME/OUTPUT:** Outcome 1, Output 1.2  
**TOPIC:** SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IN TOURISM SECTOR  
**REFERENCE:** WRITTEN QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

**QUESTION No.53**  
(Written QON)

**Senator O'Brien** asked:

- (a) Is the Department undertaking any activities in relation to skills development in the tourism sector?
- (b) Does the Department undertake any skills surveys in the industry?
- (c) Does a skills shortage exist in the industry, as it does in other industries? If so, in what occupations and locations?

**ANSWER**

- (a) The Department undertakes activities which are focussed on skills development for managers and business operators in the tourism sector.

The Department has two programs which contribute to raising the skills of tourism business operators. These programs are the Small Business Enterprise Culture program (SBEC) and the Business Ready Program for Indigenous Tourism (BRPIT). The SBEC program aims to develop and enhance the business skills of small business owner-managers and demonstrate the contribution that such skills can make to business viability and growth. The BRPIT program will fund business mentors to work directly with a portfolio of commercially viable Indigenous tourism businesses to transfer skills to individuals in the businesses on all aspects of small business and the tourism industry.

The Department provides secretariat support to the Restaurant and Catering Industry Action Agenda. One of the key areas in this Action Agenda is employment, education and training. Through the Action Agenda, a number of strategies are being progressed in conjunction with the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST). A copy of the Restaurant and Catering Action Agenda is publicly available on the Department's website at [www.industry.gov.au](http://www.industry.gov.au).

The Department is also represented on the Tourism and Hospitality Industry Advisory Committee (a sub-committee to the newly established Service Industries Skills Council) which is part of the Education, Science and Training portfolio.

The Department is currently in the early stages of developing a National Tourism Investment Strategy, a 2004 election commitment, which will develop initiatives to attract further private sector investment in tourism infrastructure, research, innovation and education. As part of developing this strategy, the Department will commission research which deals with investment issues, including a focus on tourism labour market demand and supply and skills investment.

The Department also works with the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs on issues relating to tourism industry access to skilled staff from overseas.

- (b) The Department has not directly undertaken any skills surveys in the tourism industry. This generally falls under the responsibility of DEST and the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR).

- (c) See the response to part (b) of this question.