

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Resources, Energy and Tourism Portfolio

Additional Budget Senate Estimates

10 February 2010

Question: AR24
Topic: Stimulus Package
Proof Hansard Page: E14

Senator Macdonald asked:

Senator IAN MACDONALD—Mr Pierce, could you extend that to where all of the stimulus package money on tourism has been spent, not just South Australia but across Australia?

Mr Pierce—It is about infrastructure which we are saying has a relationship with tourism—and people referred to roads before, for instance. We are quite happy to see what we can find, but I think it is more appropriate for that to be a question to the infrastructure department, who will have the total amount available. But I can go and look for it.

Senator IAN MACDONALD—All I am saying is what you are doing for South Australia you can do for other states as well.

Mr Pierce—We will see what we can do for you.

Senator IAN MACDONALD—Thank you very much.

Answer:

There are a number of Australian Government programs, funded under the stimulus package that are specifically designed to improve infrastructure. This response covers programs administered by the Australian Government only (the question also asks for information state government programs).

Infrastructure programs are the responsibility of the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government. Due to the nature of the tourism industry, it is only possible to outline in general terms of how the tourism industry benefits from infrastructure programs. This will change between regions, depending on the region's tourism characteristics. For instance, programs that deliver funds to upgrade road infrastructure may have a relationship to tourism but the road constructed may not be for the exclusive use of tourists and as such could not be attributed the title of "tourism infrastructure".

Programs/Initiatives that have benefited the tourism sector through economic stimulus

Program Name	Purpose	Relationship to Tourism
Jobs Fund	<p>Support and create jobs and skills development through projects that build community and social infrastructure. Streams of funding include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Jobs • Get Communities Working • Infrastructure Employment Projects. 	<p>Many of the projects that have been announced are likely to have benefits for tourism as the improved infrastructure will positively impact on the tourism experience.</p> <p>Two streams in particular; bike paths (\$40 million) and heritage (\$60 million) provided funding to improve community assets that are important for tourism.</p>
Stimulus Payments	To stimulate spending in the economy and support Australian jobs.	These payments may have boosted the tourism sector through increased spending in the travel, hospitality and retail sectors.
Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program	Part of the Nation Building Economic Stimulus Plan available to local government authorities to build and modernize community infrastructure.	Community infrastructure, especially in regional areas, is important for tourism.
Financial Assistance Grants to Local Government	Assist councils deal with the effects of the economic downturn.	The grants are untied in the hands of local government, allowing councils to spend the grants according to local priorities. It is likely that some of this council expenditure will benefit tourism through the improvement of community infrastructure.