

**Senate Standing Committee on Economics**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

Resources, Energy and Tourism Portfolio  
Additional Estimates  
14 February 2013

**Question:** AR15  
**Topic:** Tourism Industry  
**Proof Hansard Page:** Written

**Senator Ronaldson asked:**

**14. Independence of Tourism Research Australia**

With respect to the Program 4 line activity, *“facilitating the provision of research and statistics to support business investment and guide tourism policy development”*, are planning discussions underway within the department for Tourism Research Australia (TRA) to be returned to its former position as an independent agency, or has TRA’s ‘Statement of professional independence’ sufficiently provided for genuine independence from government interference?

**Answer:**

Prior to moving into RET, TRA was not an independent agency but a business unit of Tourism Australia. Whilst TRA is administratively a Branch within the Tourism Division of the Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism, its Statement of Professional Independence highlights the independent manner in which the agency acts. TRA’s workplans are overseen by the National Tourism Research Advisory Board that comprises representatives from industry, government and academe. TRA’s Statement of Professional Independence provides for genuine independence from government interference.