

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Resources, Energy and Tourism Portfolio

Budget Senate Estimates

2 June 2009

Question: BR-18

Topic: Business Events Australia

Proof Hansard Page: E59 – 60

Senator Birmingham asked:

Senator BIRMINGHAM—Thank you, Chair. Thank you to the witnesses, and particularly to Mr Buckley for your services; you are departing us all. We have very little time left. My understanding is that between the 2006-07 budget and the 2007-08 budget there was a \$600,000, or 10 per cent, cut in the funding to Business Events Australia. Is that correct?

Mr Buckley—I would have to take the number on notice. The Business Events budget is complicated in that there is a central business events area that we fund and we also fund business event activity across the globe. We bring those two together to get a total number. I would need to take it on notice.

Senator BIRMINGHAM—Let me help, because you have already taken it on notice once.

Mr Buckley—I gave you the answer.

Senator BIRMINGHAM—In 2007-08 it was \$5.737 million. In 2008-09 it was \$5.12 million. That is about a \$600,000 or slightly more than 10 per cent cut.

Mr Buckley—If that is the number I gave you, then, yes.

Senator BIRMINGHAM—What was the impact of that cut in terms of operations?

Mr Buckley—We would not be able to identify specifics, I suspect, because of the nature of the changing role that Business Events has played from Tourism Australia from 2006-07 to 2007-08. We have done a range of different things in that next year, as we have done a range of different things again this year in terms of campaign development and other things. Again, I can take it on notice and I can give you some further information on the nature of the activity and the outcomes of that activity in each year. That would be the best way to respond.

Senator BIRMINGHAM—Can you provide us with details of the impact of the cut on operations?

Mr Buckley—Yes.

Answer:

Tourism Australia's actual expenditure on business events during 2008/09 was \$5.87 million (compared to the budget estimate of \$5.12m). This included expenditure in Australia and by international offices. The difference between the actual expenditure and the Budget estimate was due to expanded cooperative marketing opportunities offered to industry partners.

TA's marketing activity during 2008/09 played an important role in increasing Australia's visibility as a business events destination at a time of contracting expenditure on corporate incentives and meetings due to the impact of the global recession.

Tourism Australia launched a new marketing campaign during 2008/09 focused on the corporate incentives and meetings market which has appeared in 25 business events media outlets globally. There was increased media coverage of Australia through an expanded portfolio of content for targeted trade magazines and online media.

Tourism Australia almost doubled the number of familiarisation visits for international buyers during 2008/09, hosting around 70 buyers from 10 markets.

Through our presence at international trade shows, familiarisation visits and trade missions, Australia reached an estimated 16,600 corporate meeting planners and buyers compared to 15,118 during 2007/08. For example, during Team Australia Business Events Educational (TABEE) held in Kuala Lumpur during March, 52 sales leads were generated over two days of the event.

There were 78,037 unique monthly visitors to the Business Events website during 2008/09 compared with 33,871 during 2007/08. This was a direct result of the new campaign for the corporate incentives and meetings market.