

**Senate Standing Committee on Economics**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**Treasury Portfolio**

Budget Estimates

1 June – 3 June 2010

**Question: BET 215**

**Topic: Regional Australian Population**

**Hansard Page: Written**

**Senator WILLIAMS asked:**

1. If it is anticipated that Australia population is projected to reach 50 million, what role do you see Regional Australia taking in absorbing some of that growth?
2. The NSW Dept of Planning has projected by 2036 that NSW will grow by 2.25 million and 1.7 will be crowded into Sydney. The Sydney Morning Herald was full of reports last week that the NSW Government won't be able to commit to any new infrastructure projects for 10 years. Do you have any plans to reduce Sydney's population pressures by decentralisation to regional areas?
3. The same Department of Planning 2036 projections indicated that inland NSW will lose over 5000 in total. What are you going to do increase regional areas population and reduce Sydney's
4. The same concerns are coming from QLD where Premier Bligh has held a variety of summits to work out ways to reduce the population and infrastructure pressures in the SE corner of QLD and increase the appeal of Regional NSW. What is your comment on the Queensland Government's policy?
5. Population growth is occurring in our Regional Cities both Coastal and Inland however the 2<sup>nd</sup> tier Provincial cities and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tier Country communities are struggling or even losing population. What strategies will you put in place to turn this around?
6. How will the Mining Industry maximise its potential if it can't attract skilled and Professional workers to unappealing country towns that have such a poor image?

**Answer:**

The 2010 Intergenerational Report projects Australia's population to reach 35.9 million by 2050, assuming current long run demographic trends continue.

In April 2010, the Hon Tony Burke MP was appointed Minister for Population and charged with developing Australia's first comprehensive Population Strategy.

Mr Burke will consider the likely trajectory of population growth and the challenges and opportunities this will create. He also will be tasked with developing the cross government frameworks that will be required to make the most of the opportunities, and minimise the risks, associated with population growth.

Australia's first Population Strategy will consider the social and economic

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infrastructure Australia will need to support a growing population, including the roads, housing and service delivery network.

It will also consider the opportunities a growing population will create for economic growth and to further develop and grow Australia's regional towns and communities.