

Senate Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Industry, Tourism and Resources Portfolio
Supplementary Budget Estimates 2005-2006, 2 November 2005

QUESTION No.SBI-87

Senator Campbell asked:

Please provide a copy of:

- (a) the full text of all applications, including stages in a graduated application process, made and/ or supported by the ABCB for research on accessible housing to be conducted, and any research reports that resulted from such applications;
- (b) the full text of the expression of interest/tender brief for each accessible housing consultancy;
- (c) the full text of the detailed methodology/plan, agreed between the ABCB and the consultant(s), for each accessible housing consultancy; and
- (d) the final report received by the ABCB for each accessible housing consultancy.

ANSWER

- (a) A copy of the ABCB application to the CRCCI has been provided to the Senate Economics Legislation Committee Secretariat.
- (b) A copy of the request for tender for each consultancy has been provided to the Senate Economics Legislation Committee Secretariat.
- (c) These documents are commercial contracts between the parties and are currently commercial-in-confidence. As such, it would not be appropriate for the Department to disclose these documents. Disclosure of these documents might potentially expose details of the consultant/s methodology/s to competitors, which could be damaging to the parties involved.
- (d) Consultancy 1: A final report was not received under the first contract. However, the research material submitted by the contractor was provided to the Victorian Building Commission to assist with the second contract.
Consultancy 2: A final report has not been received by the ABCB as at 29 November 2005.

QUESTION No.SBI-88

Senator Campbell asked:

Given that the proportion of the Australian population over 65 years of age is projected to double to more than 25% by 2050 and that very little housing presently is suitable for optimal independent functioning by older people and people with mobility impairments; and also given that most people with disabilities and older people cannot afford the substantial expenditure of modifying their homes to make them optimal for independent functioning and government financial support for such modifications is grossly inadequate; what priority is the ABCB and the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources giving to ensuring that there is ready availability of housing which maximises independence for people with disabilities and older people thus providing them with real housing choices?

ANSWER

Accessible housing research is included in the Board's current work program. The ABCB convened a forum in Sydney on Accessible Housing in April 2003 with diverse attendance, including government officials and stakeholders representing the industry, disability and aged sectors. The forum considered options for increasing the availability of accessible housing, some of which fall within the ABCB's domain, specifically the need for a research project to be carried out. This laid the foundation for the research now being undertaken.

In addition to the research project, the ABCB is a major sponsor of the Victorian Building Commission's publication "Welcome - Design Ideas for Accessible Homes". This non-regulatory design manual was first published in 2002 and is available for purchase.