

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2004-2005 ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome: 3

Output Group: 3.3 - Support for the Australian education and training export industry and international relationships.

DEST Question No. E758_05

Senator Carr provided in writing.

Question:

- (a) In what years did AEI and/or DEST jointly fund the annual Australian International Education Conference with IDP Education Australia? In what year did DEST cease to fund it jointly? Why?
- (b) In what year or years did DEST act as a sponsor or minor funding partner, however called, for the conference?
- (c) Did DEST, in the years when you jointly funded the conference or sponsored it, receive full financial accounting and reporting on expenditure and revenue associated with the conference from IDP? In what years?
- (d) Can DEST provide details of those financial reports?
- (e) In the years when DEST was associated with the conference, did it ever make a loss? When, and how much?

Answer:

International education annual conference

(a) The Department has not jointly funded IDP International Education conferences. When the Australian International Education Foundation (AIEF) was established within DEET in November 1994 the then Secretary undertook to provide funding to IDP of \$200,000 over two years for "conferences".

The cost of AIEF's involvement in the 1995 IDP Conference was around \$220,000 made up of \$100,000 for cash sponsorship and about \$120,000 for other costs associated with AIEF staff involvement – including bringing Counsellors and Locally Engaged Staff to Australia. This funding was for AIEF's integrated participation in the IDP Conference through an "AIEF Business Stream" on day 3 of the conference, rather than joint management, organisation and funding of it.

In 1996 DEET, through AIEF, provided \$100,000 sponsorship funding for the IDP conference. This sponsorship was by way of strategic relationship management with IDP rather than joint funding for the conference. At the time of the 1997 IDP Conference, AIEF was under review, and no AIEF funding or presence was provided for the 1997 conference.

(b) Minor sponsorships (in the range of \$8,000 - \$20,000 per year) were provided for the IDP Conference following establishment of AEI in 1998. For example, \$12,500 was provided in 1999, and \$8,400 in 2000 under standard "sponsor benefit" agreements which do not require provision of conference financial information. Approximately this level of sponsorship funding was continued up to 2002. In 2003 AEI did not sponsor the IDP conference, but instead paid for an exhibition booth for a fee of \$4,180 and funded the cost of a small number of AEI staff to participate. In 2004 AEI paid IDP \$4,400 for an exhibition booth at the conference. AEI also participated on IDP's Industry Advisory Committee, a committee established by IDP to seek the views and advice of industry on the program and themes for the conference. In addition to this involvement, 7 AEI staff presented in specific sessions of the conference, AEI funded the travel costs of an international delegate from the Middle East and an additional 15 AEI staff attended part or all of the conference as participants

(c) No. The DEST Financial Manual states,

"Final financial acquittal is a certification by a departmental Project Officer that the contractor, provider or recipient has provided an acceptable report on how the programme funds have been spent or committed and that the contractor, provider, or recipient is discharged from any further reporting under the contract or agreement. To be acceptable the report must include a certification by the contractor, provider or recipient which:

- discloses that the funds received were used for the purpose for which the funds were provided; and
- identifies the extent of any financial adjustment necessary in either the Department's or the contractor's, provider's or recipient's favour. "

Where a grant is for a specified purpose, the Department need only establish that the funds received were used for the purpose for which the funds were provided. A full disclosure of the total expenditure and revenue associated with the activity supported is not required.

Since 1998 DEST has negotiated a sponsorship/purchaser package (in most years) which entailed specific deliverables provided by IDP relevant to AEI's participation in the Conference (eg an exhibition booth, display table, speakers sessions, signage of AEI logo, inclusion of AEI materials in Conference satchel, recognition in Conference promotional material, etc). Acquittal of funding was against the items specified in each contract.

(d) No. See c above.

(e) The Department is not aware of the profit and loss situation of any of the IDP Conferences.