

**SENATE EMPLOYMENT, WORKPLACE RELATIONS AND EDUCATION
LEGISLATION COMMITTEE**

**2005-2006 BUDGET SENATE ESTIMATES HEARING
30 ,31 MAY and 3 JUNE 2005**

EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS PORTFOLIO

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Outcome 1 : Efficient and effective labour market assistance

Output Group: 1.2 Labour market programme management and delivery

Outputs: 1.2.3 Indigenous Employment Programmes

Question Number: W133-06

Question:

Senator Carr provided in writing:

Of the submissions released to date which comment on overall funding, very few indicate that the proposed changes will be effective without increased funds for CDEPs. In verbal evidence, Mr Harvey indicated that the Department is looking at better linkages with other programmes from which funding could be sourced, including business development programmes. Have such programmes previously been under-spending their funding allocations? If so, by how much?

Answer:

Within the DEWR portfolio, funding to support business development can be accessed through the Indigenous Employment Programme (IEP) and the Business Development Programme (BDP).

Under IEP, funding is provided for the Department's Indigenous Small Business Fund (ISBF) and the Indigenous Capital Assistance Scheme (ICAS) Indigenous business programmes. For the past two financial years, the IEP programme, which includes Indigenous business development elements, has been fully expended with \$58.43M total expenditure in 2002-03 and \$83.17M total expenditure in 2003-04. The total programme allocation of \$68.98M in 2004-05 is currently expected to be fully expended.

The Business Development Programme (BDP), formerly delivered by ATSIK/ATSIS, was transferred to the DEWR portfolio as part of the 1 July 2004 mainstreaming of Indigenous programmes. The BDP, as of 24 March 2005, is now delivered by Indigenous Business Australia (IBA) a Commonwealth Statutory Authority who is part of the DEWR Portfolio.

It is anticipated that the BDP will be fully committed by the end of the current financial year. The Department is unable to comment on prior year expenditure of the BDP.

The Department and IBA are committed to the proposed CDEP reforms and are currently working closely to identify commercial opportunities within CDEP activities and utilise all aspects of the Indigenous business development programmes to assist CDEP organisations identify and develop those commercial opportunities.