

EMPLOYMENT, WORKPLACE RELATIONS AND EDUCATION

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2003-2004 ESTIMATES SUPPLEMENTARY HEARING

Outcome: 2
Output Group: 2.1

DEST Question No. E342_04

Senator Carr asked on 5 November 2003, EWRE Hansard pages 37-38

Questions:

Master Builders Association

- (a) In relation to the construction skills training centre in WA, was there a similar arrangement with the Master Builders Association of Western Australia?
- (b) Were any payments made by ANTA to the Master Builders Association?
- (c) Is it the case that the Master Builders Association facility is no longer operating?
- (d) Were any Commonwealth monies associated with that centre and, if there were, have any efforts been made to recover those moneys?

Construction Skills Training Centre

- (e) Can you establish whether there was any attempt, at any point by the union in its application, to hide the fact that it was involved in seeking this money and whether the application to ANTA was on union letterhead?

Answer:

ANTA has provided the following response:

- (a) Our investigations reveal that ANTA has not provided any skill centre funding to the Master Builders' Association of Western Australia. However, the Association did receive funding assistance of \$35,000 by way of an Institutional Development Grant approved by the former Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) on 9 July 1993.

DEET entered into a Deed of Agreement with The Master Builders' Association of Western Australia (MBA - WA) on 3 September 1993. The purpose of the grant was to assist MBA - WA to:

- promote generally the development of appropriate flexible entry level training arrangements and the training reform agenda; and
- facilitate the introduction of traineeships including Career Start Traineeships, the Australian Traineeship System and where appropriate the Australian Vocational Certificate to industry.

The funds were to assist MBA - WA to engage a Training Liaison Officer (TLO) for a period of 12 months.

Under the agreement between the parties MBA – WA was required to submit an Operational plan prior to the release of the first payment and to provide monthly progress reports over the period of the grant.

- (b) The total value of the approved grant was \$35,000. DEET made the first payment of \$15,000 to MBA – WA on 27 September 1993.

Responsibility for the administration of National Programs and National Projects transferred to ANTA on 1 January 1994. The project file was transferred to ANTA as part of the process.

ANTA made the second payment of \$10,000 on 7 April 1994 and the final payment of \$10,000 on 21 June 1994. The contract was acquitted by ANTA on 9 January 1995 based on written advice provided by the auditors of the MBA – WA.

- (c) As the funds provided were not for the purpose of the construction of the facility, ANTA has no knowledge of the current operational status of MBA – WA.
- (d) The funding in this circumstance was to support the engagement of a Training Liaison Officer for 12 months and the contract was fully acquitted in 1995. The funds had been expended for the purpose of the contract and there were no funds needing to be recovered. Due to the nature of the services provided, the recouping of project monies, should MBA-WA have ceased operations after the project was acquitted, would not be appropriate.
- (e) Our records confirm that the WA Builders' Labourers, Painters and Plasters Union of Workers are listed as the proponent on the application for funding. The covering letter with the final submission dated 26 June 1998 was on the Construction Skills Centre letterhead, however the title page of the submission states 'a submission for skill centre extensions funding by the WA Builders' Labourers, Painters and Plasters Union of Workers'.

Our funding schedule with the WA Department states that the grant was approved for payment to the WA Builders' Labourers, Painters and Plasters Union of Workers.