

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

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

Outcome: 1

Output Group: 1.3 – Assistance for quality teaching and learning

DEST Question No. E683_04

Senator Stott Despoja asked on 17 November 2003.

Question:

The BIAP (Book Industry Assistance Plan) was set up to support Australian book printers, publishers and authors. How has this objective been monitored, especially with regard to the grants to Primary School libraries and the educational text book subsidy?

Answer:

Educational Book Subsidy Scheme and Grants to Primary School Libraries

DEST administers two elements under the Book Industry Assistance Plan (BIAP), Grants to Primary School Libraries (PSL) and the Educational Text Book Subsidy Scheme (ETSS).

The objective of the PSL programme is to provide financial assistance to libraries of Australian Primary Schools in connection with the acquisition of books by Australian authors or books produced in Australia.

The PSL programme is administered to individual schools by the government, independent and catholic education authorities in each State or Territory. As a requirement of receiving PSL funds, which are based on a enrolment shares basis, from the Australian Government each education authority must provide the Australian Government with an annual acquittal of these funds, audited by an independent auditor, which certifies that all funds were expended for the purpose of the programme and in accordance with the contract.

Since the launch of the PSL programme DEST has continued to receive a great deal of positive feedback regarding the programme from school librarians, principals, authors, publishers and members of the public.

Although the Educational Textbook Subsidy Scheme was included as an element of the BIAP, its purpose was to alleviate the impact of the GST on the cost of educational textbooks for students and parents and was not set up to support Australian book printers, publishers and authors.