

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2005-2006 SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome: 2

Output Group: 2.1 – Funding for Vocational Education and Training

DEST Question No. E781_06

Senator Brown asked on Monday 31 October 2005, Finance and Public Administration Hansard page 58.

Question:

- (a) Yes, but not a \$4 million allocation which was going to the 20-person skills company you referred to—FAFPESC—and ESC, which is an advisory board for the timber industry and which has both union and employer representatives but is quite heavily represented by the forestry branch of the CFMEU and chaired by the forestry division national secretary of that union, Trevor Smith. The union's assistant national secretary, Mr Michael O'Connor, is also a director and prime lobbyist for its interests. **Where has that money actually gone?**
- (b) Is that work going to be subcontracted?
- (c) What strictures (restrictions) are put on that allocation?
- (d) Were there any conditions at the time of the Prime Minister's announcement?

Answer:

Forest and Forest Products Employment Skills Company

- (a) The \$4 m was allocated to the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. The funding will be appropriated to the Department of Education, Science and Training as part of the 2005-06 Additional Estimates Process.
- (b) Details of contractual arrangements, including any subcontracting, have not been finalised.
- (c) The arrangement is conditional upon FAFPESC agreeing to the forest and forest products industry becoming part of an Industry Skills Council by the end of 2006 and the development of an agreed business plan, including agreed funding activities and outcomes.
- (d) The following extract from the "*Tasmanian Community Forest Agreement Fact Sheet Number 19, Skills and Training in the Tasmanian Forest Industry,*" which was issued at the time of the Prime Minister's announcement, states the conditions of the funding.

"Funding of \$4 million will be specifically earmarked for the forest and forest products industry, represented by the Forest and Forest Products Employment Skills Company Ltd (FAFPESC), to become part of a National Skills Council, conditional on an agreed business plan including agreed funding activities and outcomes."