

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio**

**Department of Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government**

**Supplementary Budget Estimates 17-20 October 2011**

**Question: 103**

**Topic: Constitutional Recognition of Local Government - Community Meetings**

**Asked By: Senator JOYCE**

**Type of Question: Written**

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 2 December 2011**

**Number of pages: 2**

There are currently only 6 scheduled community meetings across the whole of Australia;

- a) Does the Panel intend to hold more community meetings between now and December when the Panel is due to report?
- b) If so, where?
- c) Will this include rural, regional and remote areas of Australia?
- d) How will communities know about these meetings?
- e) Is it only advertised on the Expert Panel's website?

**Answer:**

- a) The Expert Panel on Constitutional Recognition of Local Government is an independent panel. The process and location for its consultations with the public and a range of interested stakeholders, including local government representatives, State and Federal parliamentarians, community groups, and constitutional experts has been a matter for the Panel. For further information see the Panel's website at: [www.localgovrecognition.gov.au](http://www.localgovrecognition.gov.au).
- b) Any consideration of where possible further meetings could be held is a matter for the Expert Panel.

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- c) As advised on the Panel's website, the six meetings to date have been in regional and remote locations including: Dubbo, Karratha, Wodonga, Townsville, Launceston and Murray Bridge.
- d) The Expert Panel has advertised the community meetings through a range of mediums including:
- advertisements placed in national, metropolitan and regional press;
  - radio advertisements in and around the region of most community meetings;
  - editorials offered or notices emailed to groups such as local government associations, councils, Regional Development Australia Committees, chambers of commerce and law societies;
  - newsflashes and posting of the community meeting schedule on the Panel's website;
  - media alerts and releases distributed to media outlets in and around the region of each community meeting; and
  - regular messages sent via Twitter and Facebook.
- e) The website is just one tool of communication and advertisement employed by the Expert Panel.