

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Supplementary Budget Estimates 17-20 October 2011

Question: 12

Topic: Input from RDAs

Asked By: Senator MACDONALD

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Ms Fleming: The first phase of that project was a consultancy whereby we spoke to all of the nine northern RDAs and asked each of them where they thought there was a need for more data across the north. We are considering the resources we have available to look at where we would now best apply our efforts to enhance the statistical coverage across Northern Australia. Phase 2 is still in development; in phase 1 we have an input from RDAs, in short.

Senator IAN MACDONALD: Is the input from the RDAs a public document that can be made available to this committee?

Mr O'Brien: Yes.

Ms Fleming: We could take that on notice and I think it should be able to be made available.

Answer:

Phase One of the Data Development project was undertaken by SGS Economics and Planning, and included a desktop analysis of Regional Development Australia (RDA) roadmaps to identify gaps and issues with the evidence base used to inform RDA regional Plans. Additionally, a scan of data sources currently used by RDAs was undertaken and a wide range of potential demographic, economic, social and environmental data sources were identified. SGS also consulted with all northern RDA committees and relevant local stakeholders.

SGS Economics and Planning has developed a Phase One Report which incorporates inputs from RDA plans and consultations.

This report has identified some of the data issues facing northern Australia. The report has also provided the Department with advice on how to better support RDAs and provide advice and assistance on how to improve the plans of participant RDAs.

This Phase One report is available on the Department's website at:

www.regional.gov.au/regional/ona/nadd.aspx.