

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 01

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Women's Representation in Decision-Making

Hansard Page: 17 (21/05/07)

Senator McEwen asked:

Senator McEWEN—So, you anticipate that a business plan will be prepared prior to the next Budget Estimates?

Ms Page—Yes, I anticipate that.

Senator McEWEN—Would you be able to provide a copy to the Committee, if it comes beforehand?

Ms Page—Yes, we could certainly do that.

Senator McEWEN—Have you any sense of what criteria the Department would apply to judge whether or not the program has been a success?

Ms Page—Not at this stage. I think that is something that we could supply at that time.

Answer:

A business plan is currently being developed, detailing the range of activities planned and the evaluation criteria for the success of the programme. This information **will be supplied to the Committee** once completed.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 02

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Women's Representation in Decision Making

Hansard Page: 17 (21/05/07)

Senator McEwen asked:

Senator McEWEN—Are there staff within the Department dedicated to this particular funding?

Ms Page—There will be some staff dedicated, yes.

Senator McEWEN—How many?

Ms Page—I will take that on notice.

Answer:

There will be two staff dedicated to managing the funding for this initiative.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 03

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Broken Hill Tourism Brochure

Hansard Page: 46 (22/05/07)

Senator O'Brien asked:

Senator O'BRIEN—Can someone confirm that under the *Regional Assistance* program \$356,280 was provided to the Outback Area Consultative Committee to provide a colour booklet entitled *Wide Canvas Country: Broken Hill Australia—No Artificial Additives?*

Ms McNally—That is correct.

Senator O'BRIEN—When was this funding provided?

Ms McNally—We have not got the date with us. We would have to check that.

Answer:

The total funding provided for the Broken Hill Destination Marketing Strategy was \$600,000 (GST-exclusive) of which \$356,280 was for the brochure. The brochure was a component of this project. The funding period in the funding contract under the *Regional Assistance* program was for the period 1 December 2002 to 30 November 2005.

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Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 04

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Broken Hill Tourism Brochure

Hansard Page: 46 (22/05/07)

Senator O'Brien asked:

Senator O'BRIEN—Who was the Chair of the ACC at the time?

Ms McNally—At the time?

Senator O'BRIEN—Yes.

Ms McNally—We would have to check that.

Answer:

The Chair of the Outback Area Consultative Committee was Mr John Williams.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 05

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Broken Hill Tourism Brochure

Hansard Page: 46 (22/05/07)

Senator O'Brien asked:

Senator O'BRIEN—Was there a funding application on which the funding was based?

Ms Page—This was under a previous program so that is partly why we do not have the information in great detail. We are happy to provide that on notice.

Answer:

Yes – there was a *Regional Assistance* program funding application submitted by the Outback Area Consultative Committee.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 06

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Broken Hill Tourism Brochure

Hansard Pages: 46–47 (22/05/07)

Senator O'Brien asked:

Senator O'BRIEN—Do you know whether the 280,000-odd copies have all been distributed?

Ms McNally—I would have to check that.

Senator O'BRIEN—While you are checking, can you find out when they were distributed?

Ms McNally—Yes.

Senator O'BRIEN—I want to find out how many were distributed to the Broken Hill visitor information centre and, if you are aware, where they distributed the copies to and over what period of time.

Answer:

A total of 304,000 brochures were printed.

The Broken Hill Visitor Information Centre has advised that the distribution to date include:

- 23,000 to all households in the region (11,500 x 2 books) February/March 2005
- 17,000 Travel Down under Magazine – Europe
- 10,000 to all Visitor Information Centers NSW and Australia
- 1,000 to Tourism NSW officers overseas
- 12,000 distribution at Caravan & Camping shows during 2006/2007
- 30,000 distribution in response to marketing campaigns and general inquiries via Broken Hill Visitor information Centre
- 90,000 to the general public and local tourism outlets through the Broken Hill Visitor Information Centre.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 07

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Broken Hill Tourism Brochure

Hansard Page: 47 (22/05/07)

Senator O'Brien asked:

Senator O'BRIEN—What was the select tender process used to select the printer?

Ms McNally—A steering committee reviewed the tenders and made the selection.

Senator O'BRIEN—Who is on the steering committee?

Ms McNally—I would have to obtain that information for you.

Senator O'BRIEN—Why a Sydney printer rather than a local printer?

Ms McNally—I do not have that information particularly, but I imagine it would be around price competitiveness. We can check that out for you.

Answer:

The Steering Committee was a sub-committee of the Outback Area Consultative Committee (OACC). Membership was:

- Independent Chair - **Noel Hicks**, former Federal Member for Riverina and former Mayor of Broken Hill;
- **Pam McRae** – then Chair of the Broken Hill Regional Tourist Association and accommodation house owner;
- **Fran McKinnon** – former Broken Hill City Councilor and member of the tourist association;
- **Wincen Cuy** – Executive Manager, ORTO (State Tourism Board) and local tour operator;
- **Margaret McBride** - local small business person and film location consultant.
- **Ruth Sandow** – Milparinka Heritage and Tourist Association;
- **Albert Woodroffe** – artist and Silverton community representative;
- **Neil McGarry** – then Tourism Manager of Broken Hill City Council;
- **Kym Fuller** - former Tourism Manager of Broken Hill City Council (replaced Neil McGarry);
- **Fritz Angst** – Secretary Manager of Broken Hill Legion Club, operators of the Royal Exchange Hotel and Broken Hill Outback Tours; and
- **Bruce Robjohns** – tour operator of White Cliffs.

Production of the booklet was via a selective tender (five companies selected on known industry experience, based in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and regional NSW).

The tender called for a proposal that included all concept design, development, artwork, photography and printing of the booklet.

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Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 08

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Broken Hill Tourism Brochure

Hansard Page: 47 (22/05/07)

Senator O'Brien asked:

Senator O'BRIEN—Why was the foreword not written by an appropriate Minister, given that this is a tourist brochure?

Ms McNally—I would have to check.

Answer:

The Steering Committee resolved to ask their local MP, John Cobb, to write the foreword on behalf of the community.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 09

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Broken Hill Tourism Brochure

Hansard Page: 47 (22/05/07)

Senator O'Brien asked:

Senator O'BRIEN—I would say that we have seen a massive amount of money invested and, peculiarly, Mr Cobb features prominently in something that was sent in two copies to every household in that part of the electorate. So how many other tourist brochures, booklets or magazines are the Department aware have been produced using Commonwealth regional program money?

Ms McNally—I would have to provide that information on notice.

Answer:

To provide the level of information requested would involve an inappropriate allocation of departmental resources.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 10

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Broken Hill Tourism Brochure

Hansard Page: 47 (22/05/07)

Senator O'Brien asked:

Senator O'BRIEN—How many other tourist brochures, booklets or magazines have been sent to households in electorates or regions they focus on?

Ms McNally—I would have to check that as well.

Answer:

To provide the level of information requested would involve an inappropriate allocation of departmental resources.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 11

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Regional Partnerships Procedures Manual

Hansard Page: 49 (22/05/07)

Senator O'Brien asked:

Senator O'BRIEN—Who will see a copy of the procedures manual when it is complete?

Ms McNally—The procedures manual is normally used internally, but it could be made available if people would like to have a look at it. It would not be a problem.

Senator O'BRIEN—I am sure there will be a lot of interest in it. I am certain that I would and there may be other members of the Committee as well, so I would appreciate it if it could be supplied.

Answer:

The procedures manual is still being completed.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 12

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Regional Partnerships Procedures Manual

Hansard Page: 49 (22/05/07)

Senator O'Brien asked:

Senator O'BRIEN—Perhaps I can ask the Minister the same question, if it is a matter for Government rather than the Department. What is being done to ensure the process of assessing and approving regional partnership projects in the lead-up to the election is transparent and rigorous?

Senator Johnston—I would have to take that on notice for the Minister.

Answer:

All *Regional Partnerships* applications are assessed by the Department on their merits against the extent to which they meet the programme objectives, the programme assessment criteria and are consistent with Australian Government policy. The programme guidelines, including the programme objectives and assessment criteria, are available on the Department's Intranet at: <http://www.regionalpartnerships.gov.au>.

Decisions on *Regional Partnerships* programme funding are made by the *Regional Partnerships* Ministerial Committee. This Committee is made up of: the Hon Mark Vaile MP, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Transport and Regional Services; the Hon Jim Lloyd MP, Minister for Local Government, Territories and Roads; and the Hon Gary Nairn MP, the Special Minister of State.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 13

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Regional Partnerships Programme – Due Diligence Process

Hansard Page: 51 (22/05/07)

Senator O'Brien asked:

Senator O'BRIEN—Have there been occasions when due diligence has revealed a problem that has required a reconsideration of the decision to approve?

Ms McNally—When issues are raised, we go back to the ministerial committee and provide them with advice. They can either agree with the previous decision or they can overturn that decision.

Senator O'BRIEN—How often have you had to do that?

Ms McNally—Fairly rarely.

Senator O'BRIEN—Once, twice, five times, 10 times?

Ms McNally—Over a period of a year, probably half a dozen times.

Senator O'BRIEN—How many application decisions have been overturned as a result of that process?

Ms McNally—I would have to take that on notice.

Ms Page—It is also possible that the ministerial committee might choose to modify the nature of their approval rather than overturn it; in other words, to ask for particular controls to be placed through the funding agreement.

Senator O'BRIEN—Thank you for that. We would like details of applications where such additional conditions have been applied as a result of the due diligence process.

Answer:

Over the last 12 months, none.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 14

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Atherton Tablelands Geographic Information System (@GIS)
Sustainable Regions Project

Hansard Page: 53 (22/05/07)

Senator O'Brien asked:

Senator O'BRIEN—But have matched grant moneys been provided—money to match the grant?

Ms McNally—I would have to take that on notice.

Answer:

At the Estimates Hearing 22 May 2007, the Executive Director Ms McNally stated that *“The project itself was reported on by the applicant. Then it would have been signed off in terms of having met the funding agreement by the Department. A final payment has been made on the basis of an audited statement.”*

The Department has not formally accepted the final report and is continuing to liaise with the company in relation to the financial acquittal.

Partner funding reported on 22 February 2007 detailed contributions of \$895,458.