

**Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

**Question no.:** 173

**Program:** n/a

**Division/Agency:** (LGT) Local Government and Territories

**Topic:** Funding Agreement between the Commonwealth and the Australian Local Government Association

**Proof Hansard Page/s:** 93-94 (18/11/2013)

**Senator Smith asked:**

**Senator SMITH:** Great, fantastic, thank you very much. I am keen to understand whether a funding agreement was signed between the government or the department and the Australian local government association, and if so on what date?

**Mr Mrdak:** Because of the machinery of government changes I am a recent arrival to this area. I am advised that a funding agreement was signed between the Commonwealth and the Australian Local Government Association on 27 June 2013 for the provision of \$10 million for advertising and media buys as part of the Yes campaign for the referendum question.

**Senator SMITH:** Okay. Is that funding agreement available to be presented to the committee?

**Mr Mrdak:** I do not know that it has been made public. I will just check with my officers. I will take that on notice.

**Senator SMITH:** Thank you very much. Can you tell me how much of that \$10 million was expended between 27 June and the Prime Minister's announcement of 7 September as the election date?

**Mr Wilson:** I understand that the number was approximately \$3.5 million.

**Senator SMITH:** If you could confirm that on notice to me that would be great. Can you provide a breakdown of what that \$3.5 million represents?

**Mr Mrdak:** We will get the details. The Australian Local Government Association is currently acquitting its expenditure as part of the arrangement for the return of unspent funds. We will endeavour to provide you further information on notice.

**Senator SMITH:** Great. Just so I am clear, you will be able to provide me with a breakdown of the \$3.5 million. They are acquitting that at the moment, and you will be able to let me know how of that was print, how much was TV, if there was any, and how much was the creative element?

**Mr Mrdak:** Yes. We should get that detail in the reconciliation statement from the Local Government Association.

**Senator SMITH:** To your knowledge, of the \$3.5 million, were any moneys spent on flights and accommodation for the yes campaign?

**Mr Mrdak:** We would have to take that on notice and provide that, with the reconciliation.

**Answer:**

The Australian Local Government Association expended \$3,474,336.76 on the development and administration of the yes campaign.

Remittance advice dated 7 November 2013 provided by the Australian Local Government Association to the Department contains the following information.

Campaign expenditure approved from Government grant - \$761,216.80.

<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Advertising (Print Media)	\$317,741.10
Local Government Association of Queensland (Universal McCann)	\$391,475.70
Western Australian Local Government Association	\$52,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$761,216.80</b>

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Additional Australian local campaign Government expenditure – \$2,713,119.96

<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Campaign management	\$1,400,000.00
	\$275,448.67
Advertising consultants	\$787,281.45
Campaign executive recruitment management and advertising	\$81,793.20
Constitutional recognition campaigns launch	\$29,013.04
Local government association Queensland staffing and campaign research	\$102,843.39
Legal advice campaign matters	\$6,425.00
Media releases campaign matters	\$7,311.82
Teleconferences campaign committees	\$6,350.17
Travel ALGA staff campaign announcement and committee management	\$16,627.49
Bank fees	\$25.73
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,713,119.96</b>

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Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

**Question no.:** 174

**Program:** n/a

**Division/Agency:** (LGT) Local Government and Territories

**Topic:** Referendum Taskforce Staff

**Proof Hansard Page/s:** 94 (18/11/2013)

**Senator Smith asked:**

**Senator SMITH:** If that is not the correct evidence, please let me know. I am very confident it is the correct evidence. How many officials were working on the referendum in the department? We know that there was a referendum task force unit. I am just keen to understand how many people were working in the referendum task force unit.

**Ms Fleming:** To the best of my recollection, there were around 10 staff at its peak, but there were fewer staff during a large part of that time while it was gearing up. I think there were about 10; there might have been slightly fewer. On 2 August the number peaked at 15.

**Senator SMITH:** Can you share with me now what the roles and responsibilities of those 15 people were?

**Mr Wilson:** I think that, given that there were 15 people, it would be easier to take that on notice and provide that to you in writing.

**Answer:**

The Referendum Taskforce provided support to the government to deliver the referendum. The specific roles and functions within the Referendum Taskforce were as follows:

- Referendum Taskforce Management function. Two staff, responsible for overall leadership of the Taskforce, executive and administrative support.
- Policy and Coordination function. Eight staff, responsible for policy, budgeting, briefing and program management, including administering funding for 'Yes' and 'No' campaigns.
- Campaigns function. Five staff, responsible for stakeholder engagement, website management and the national civics campaign.

**Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

**Question no.:** 175

**Program:** n/a

**Division/Agency:** (LGT) Local Government and Territories

**Topic:** Referendum Taskforce Secondees

**Proof Hansard Page/s:** 94-95 (18/11/2013)

**The Chair asked:**

**Senator SMITH:** Fifteen people looking at the funding agreement—

**Ms Fleming:** That was just to start. They would have been organising the civics campaign associated with the referendum and other supporting activities, and looking at no campaigns.

**CHAIR:** Were these secondees?

**Ms Fleming:** Some were secondees.

**CHAIR:** And the secondees did not get extra pay because they were seconded? They got their Public Service pay plus nothing else?

**Ms Fleming:** That is my understanding.

**Mr Wilson:** They maintained Public Service employment, so they were seconded into the department of regional development at the time.

**CHAIR:** How many of them?

**Mr Wilson:** How many of them were seconded?

**CHAIR:** Yes, this is pretty interesting.

**Mr Wilson:** There was a mixture of secondees.

**CHAIR:** Half?

**Mr Wilson:** We would have to look—

**CHAIR:** Take that on notice.

**Answer:**

There were six secondees in the Taskforce.

**Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

**Question no.:** 176

**Program:** n/a

**Division/Agency:** (LGT) Local Government and Territories

**Topic:** Funding spent on the Yes Campaign

**Proof Hansard Page/s:** 95 (18/11/2013)

**Senator Smith asked:**

**Senator SMITH:** I would be very, very keen to understand the roles and responsibilities of the 15—whether they were working on the civics education campaign, for example, and whether they were working on the funding agreements. I also want to know which of them, if any, were working to assist the no campaign, whether that be on the funding agreement or on any element of the referendum involved in the no campaign. I am very confident that that will come to nil. I am keen to understand. Could you do an estimate of the cost of those 15 people and the work that they did. Obviously there is the cost of the salaries and the cost, if any, of the work that they were doing. Perhaps they might have been booking advertising.

**Mr Wilson:** We will provide you with a breakdown of what the staff were assigned to and the associated costs.

**Senator SMITH:** Exactly. In addition to that, could you detail what moneys were spent on the yes campaign by the government in addition to the moneys that were spent by the yes campaign. Does that make sense?

**Mr Wilson:** Yes.

**Answer:**

As at 2 August 2013, the specific roles and functions within the Referendum Taskforce were as follows:

- Referendum Taskforce Management function. Two staff, responsible for overall leadership of the Taskforce, executive and administrative support;
- Policy and Coordination function. Eight staff, responsible for policy, budgeting, briefing and program management, including administering funding for ‘Yes’ and ‘No’ campaigns;
- Campaigns function. Five staff, responsible for stakeholder engagement, website management and the national civics campaign.

\$0.6 million of \$0.98 million allocated for departmental expenses in 2013-14 is unspent and has been returned to the budget.

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Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

**Question no.:** 177

**Program:** n/a

**Division/Agency:** (LGT) Local Government and Territories

**Topic:** Constitutional Recognition of Local Government

**Proof Hansard Page/s:** 95-96 (18/11/2013)

**Senator Sterle asked:**

**Senator STERLE:** I only have two more; I will not take long. The minister has made a decision in relation to the subject; that is a no. Has the minister received any representations from the Australian Local Government Association regarding recognition, to your knowledge?

**Mr Mrdak:** The minister has met with the president of the Local Government Association and discussed issues around the winding up of the grant and the like, but I think that is the extent of the conversation.

**Senator STERLE:** Okay. I am only being a little bit cheeky, because we had the inquiry. I know we are not allowed to talk about inquiries, but we are well aware of ALGA's position. But there was no conversation on the substance of it—just the cleaning up.

**Mr Mrdak:** I think it was just in relation to the handling of the referendum not proceeding.

**Senator STERLE:** If it comes to light that there was a bit of anger in the room because ALGA did not get the opportunity to take it to a referendum, I am sure you would take it on notice and let us know, Mr Mrdak.

**Answer:**

No.

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**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

**Question no.:** 178

**Program:** N/A

**Division/Agency:** (LGT) Local Government and Territories

**Topic:** ALGA Yes Campaign

**Proof Hansard Page/s:** 97 (18/11/2013)

**Senator Smith asked:**

**Senator SMITH:** So the ALGA yes campaign comprised a funding agreement of \$10 million with the Commonwealth and then contributions from local government authorities from around the country. My understanding is that the government has agreed to reimburse those costs that arose as a result of the funding agreement. Has there been a request for the Commonwealth to reimburse those expenses or those costs that came from its own campaign and which were going to be met by contributions from local government authorities in whole or in part?

**Ms Fleming:** I understand the question. In the government's decision to reimburse ALGA, it reimbursed ALGA for its direct and indirect costs directly associated with the campaign. This included the reimbursement of state LGAs for their contributions to the campaign. So it covered the totality of ALGA's expenses in respect of the yes campaign. That amount was the roughly \$3.5 million. ALGA has submitted its documentation to us to support that and we are just working our way through that at the moment.

**Senator SMITH:** Just so I am clear, will the information that you provide to the committee be around those expenses that were incurred as a result of the funding agreement? Will you be able to also show those funds that have been reimbursed because of the contributions from local government authorities? Is that clear?

**Ms Fleming:** My understanding is that we will outline the elements of the acquittal.

**Answer:**

The Australian Local Government Association will be remitting the balance of their approved expenditure to the Australian Government of \$6,595,964.99 plus GST. In determining the balance, direct costs of \$761,216.80 and indirect costs of \$2,713,119.96 were taken into account.

**Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

**Question no.:** 179

**Program:** 1.1

**Division/Agency:** (LGT) Local Government and Territories

**Topic:** Flood Affected Regions in Queensland

**Proof Hansard Page/s:** 98 (18/11/2013)

**Senator Smith asked:**

**Senator LUDWIG:** Is there any intention to visit some of those flood affected regions and speak to the local councils?

**Mr Mrdak:** I am not aware of the minister's plans at this stage, but I will take that on notice, if that is okay, and come back to you in relation to the minister's plans. As you know, he knows the area very well and is well acquainted with the issues. I am sure that his program will provide for it, but I do not know the details at this point.

**Answer:**

The Deputy Prime Minister has visited the flood affected region of Hinkler Queensland on several occasions, and has made regular contact with representatives of Local Governments in the region. The Deputy Prime Minister has also visited other parts of Queensland affected by natural disasters in recent times and intends to continue to visit these regions regularly into the future. His own electorate and home city of Maryborough were among the areas affected by major flooding.



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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

**Question no.:** 180

**Program:** 1.1

**Division/Agency:** (LGT) Local Government and Territories

**Topic:** Betterment Fund

**Proof Hansard Page/s:** 98 (18/11/2013)

**Senator Ludwig asked:**

**Senator LUDWIG:** Should I ask questions about the betterment fund now?

**Mr McInnes:** Yes.

**Senator LUDWIG:** How many projects have been approved under that to date?

**Mr McInnes:** I understand that there have been 51 projects approved under the betterment fund to date of a total value of \$49.6 million.

**Senator LUDWIG:** Could you take on notice each individual project, the cost of that project, its location and the type of project that it is. Has there been any further contribution by the Commonwealth or the state to the betterment fund at this time?

**Answer:**

As at 26 November 2013, the Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA) reports that it had approved betterment projects for 27 local government authorities valued at \$97.1 million, comprising \$46.1 million from the Betterment Fund, \$42.8 million in restoration funding (Category B) and \$8.2 million in council contributions. QRA manages the fund and prioritises projects; the Commonwealth receives notification when a submission has been approved for funding.

A list of approved projects, including type and cost, is at **Attachment A**.

**180 – Attachment A – List of approved Betterment Fund projects**

Local Government Authority	Description of works	Type of project	Approved NDRRA Category B value	Approved Betterment component
North Burnett Regional Council	Gayndah Water Supply Intake	Relocation of the water treatment plant	\$2,634,117.30	\$1,195,782.00
Bundaberg Regional Council	Barretts Road	Floodway improvements	\$49,291.38	\$155,000.00
Bundaberg Regional Council	Blacks Road	Floodway improvements	\$22,721.25	\$96,168.13
Bundaberg Regional Council	Gentle Annie Road Bridge	Bridge protection works	\$138,218.40	\$130,000.00
Southern Burnett Regional Council	Mondure Wheatlands Road	Drainage and road protection	\$227,429.16	\$181,926.84

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<b>Local Government Authority</b>	<b>Description of works</b>	<b>Type of project</b>	<b>Approved NDRRA Category B value</b>	<b>Approved Betterment component</b>
Fraser Coast Regional Council	Poona Road, Moorabinda Drive, River Heads Road, Cherry Tree Road and Boundary Road	Drainage and floodway improvements	\$499,670.10	\$1,886,596.72
Gympie Regional Council	Doyle Road, Glastonbury Creek Road, Greendale Road, Moorhouse Gully Road and Moy Pocket Road	Floodway improvements	\$557,494.95	\$1,080,696.00
Bundaberg Regional Council	Bucca Road	Road and drainage improvements	\$1,798,525.35	\$1,123,734.65
Ipswich City Council	One Mile Bridge	Drainage improvements and embankment protection	\$1,525,262.44	\$1,919,196.64
Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council	Upper Mt Bentley Road	Sealing the road	\$358,447.60	\$438,998.00
Burdekin Shire Council	Comisky Road	Drainage improvements	\$38,698.75	\$155,752.03
Cherbourg Aboriginal Shore Council	Cherbourg Road and the raw water Abstraction Station	Relocation of the water station	\$346,430.25	\$277,756.75
Gladstone Regional Council	Oyster Creek Road	Drainage improvements	\$783,108.75	\$153,940.00
Lockyer Valley Regional Council (two projects)	Caffey Connection Road and Dairy Bridge	Drainage, floodway and bridge protection works	\$174,030.00	\$123,131.80
South Burnett Regional Council	Heading Road, Pound Street and Geritz Road	Drainage and road protection	\$1,221,994.00	\$170,473.37
North Burnett Regional Council	Monto Wastewater Recycling Tanks	Water tank improvements	\$91,125.00	\$74,603.00
Tablelands Regional Council	Boar Pocket Road	Drainage improvements	\$187,266.33	\$220,720.61
South Burnett Regional Council	River Road	Road protection and floodway improvements	\$255,329.45	\$517,869.54
Gladstone Regional Council	Turkey Beach Road and Round Hill Road	Drainage improvements	\$463,005.78	\$760,082.91

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<b>Local Government Authority</b>	<b>Description of works</b>	<b>Type of project</b>	<b>Approved NDRRA Category B value</b>	<b>Approved Betterment component</b>
Ipswich City Council	Old One Mile Bridge, Keanes Road Bridge, Hancock Bridge	Bridge protection works	\$274,963.51	\$95,297.97
Moreton Bay Regional Council (four projects)	Margate Parade, Wirth Road and Maba Court	Establishment of a sea wall, drainage improvements and bridge protection	\$890,602.87	\$1,778,869.47
Aurukun Shire Council	Aurukun Access Road	Road improvements	\$469,874.00	\$1,215,000.00
Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council	Elim Beach Road	Road improvements	\$294,497.50	\$1,506,966.50
Lockyer Valley Regional Council (two projects)	Thistlethwaite Bridge	Bridge improvements and protection works	\$446,424.89	\$1,259,160.11
Ipswich City Council	Colleges Crossing	Asset protection works	\$2,369,193.02	\$1,460,167.54
North Burnett Regional Council	Gayndah-Mundubbera Road	Road and drainage improvements	\$6,785,707.00	\$1,971,764.70
Fraser Coast Regional Council	Yerra Road, Dakins Road, and Arborthree Road (Rocky Creek Floodway)	Floodway and bridge protection works	\$265,820.29	\$299,125.48
Yarrabah Shire Council	Yarrabah Range Road , Buddabadoo Road, and Bilma Road	Floodway improvements	\$1,864,121.20	\$272,988.36
South Burnett Regional Council (two projects)	Silverleaf Road, Kumbia Road, Jerrards Road and Aerodome Road	Floodway and road improvements	\$1,436,837.34	\$859,409.66
Gladstone Regional Council	Gladstone Regional Council – Blackmans Gap Road	Drainage improvements	\$651,427.74	\$602,868.12

**Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**

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**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

<b>Local Government Authority</b>	<b>Description of works</b>	<b>Type of project</b>	<b>Approved NDRRA Category B value</b>	<b>Approved Betterment component</b>
Rockhampton Regional Council	Upper Ulam Road, Joskeleigh Road, Old Byfield Road, Hoys Road, Black Gin Creek Road, Manns Road, Leaholme Road, Collins Road, Smith Road, Venture Road, Bycroft Road, Dunning Road, Kalapa-Black Mountain Road, Flaherty Road, Weir Park Road, San Jose Road, Wild Road, and Hopkins Road.	Floodway and road improvements	\$808,597.96	\$906,384.80
Bundaberg Regional Council	Coonarr Road, Wallaville Goondoon Road (Sheepstation Creek), Heales Road, Miara Road, Wallaville Goondoon Road and Top Waterloo Road	Floodway and road improvements	\$1,566,961.20	\$913,942.38
Bundaberg Regional Council	Halford Drive and Marshall Avenue	Floodway and road improvements	\$160,042.50	\$553,052.40
Logan City Council	Chambers Flat Road	Floodway and road improvements	\$65,470.50	\$182,888.24
Moreton Bay Regional Council	Pringles Road	Floodway and road improvements	\$51,152.59	\$567,367.16
Scenic Rim Regional Council	Biddaddabba Creek Road and Villis Bridge	Bridge improvements and protection works	\$2,282,700.17	\$251,813.78
Central Highlands Regional Council	Brolga Gully Road, Conomarra Road, Raby Creek Road, Maddens Road, Taylors Creek Road, Conciliation Creek Road, Spring Hill Road, Eightmile Road, Malvern Road, and Wyuna Road	Floodway improvements	\$449,947.98	\$832,693.77

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<b>Local Government Authority</b>	<b>Description of works</b>	<b>Type of project</b>	<b>Approved NDRRA Category B value</b>	<b>Approved Betterment component</b>
Western Downs Regional Council	Pelican Back Road; Clifford Road, Kangaroo Creek; Roche Creek Road	Drainage, bridge and floodway improvements.	\$324,297.00	\$760,652.00
Burdekin Shire Council	Phillips Camp Road and Rifle Range Road	Drainage and floodway improvements	\$135,331.09	\$185,156.10
Somerset Regional Council (three projects)	Rocky Gully Road Lake Manchester Road, Esk-Crows Nest Road (Bowdon Crossing), Summerville Road East (Burtons Bridge), Cressbrook-Caboonbah Road (Seftons Crossing), Banks Creek Road (Savages Crossing), Ivory Creek Road (George Bell Crossing), Esk-Crows Nest Road (Ted Skinner Crossing).	Drainage, bridge and floodway improvements.	\$3,140,379.88	\$1,281,804.22
Etheridge Shire Council	Oak Park Road	Drainage improvements	\$465,153.30	\$647,122.51
Tablelands Regional Council	Sutties Gap Road	Road protection works	\$81,784.80	\$162,313.66
North Burnett Regional Council (two projects)	22 floodways across 2 roads: Boondooma Road and Kariboe Road	Floodway improvements	\$91,753.48	\$1,578,994.06
Somerset Regional Council (two projects)	Mt Stanley Road (crossings 8 and 10) Arababy Creek Road (Allery's Bridge), and Diaper Road (crossing 1 and 2)	Drainage and floodway improvements	\$512,880.18	\$770,004.88
Bundaberg Regional Council	Kendalls Flat Weir	Weir protection works	\$166,271.40	\$1,870,774.80
Toowoomba Regional Council	Pipeline Road, Leslie Bridge Road, Ironbark Road, Ravensbourne Dip Road, and Glenvale Road	Drainage improvements	\$378,533.26	\$1,746,128.23

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<b>Local Government Authority</b>	<b>Description of works</b>	<b>Type of project</b>	<b>Approved NDRRA Category B value</b>	<b>Approved Betterment component</b>
Carpentaria Shire Council	Mitchell River Crossing	Floodway protection works	\$871,882.70	\$530,428.30
Southern Downs Regional Council	North Branch Road	Road and drainage improvements	\$136,107.83	\$283,278.27
Cassowary Coast Regional Council	Ellerbeek Road, Fishers Creek Road, Schumann Road	Road and drainage improvements	\$638,284.05	\$512,753.46
Toowoomba Regional Council	Trapp Road, McGreevy Road, O'Conner Road	Drainage and floodway improvements	\$246,560.13	\$875,246.00
South Burnett Regional Council	Kingaroy Trunk Sewer	Sewer pipe improvements	\$213,193.35	\$1,418,997.85
South Burnett Regional Council	Kengoon Road, Tamrookum Church Road	Road and drainage improvements	\$278,471.52	\$798,496.86
Banana Shire Council	McCanns Road and Linkes Road	Road and drainage improvements	\$445,217.67	\$768,068.91
Toowoomba Regional Council	Ootann Road	Floodway and road improvements	\$134,661.00	\$385,172.85
Toowoomba Regional Council	Kingsthorpe Haden Road Bridge	Bridge improvements and protection works	\$460,614.00	\$1,995,620.10
Toowoomba Regional Council	Greenwattle Street and Nukku Road	Road and drainage improvements	\$366,372.75	\$1,606,376.00
Toowoomba Regional Council (two projects)	Western Creek-Bulli Creek Road and Hodgson Creek Bridge (Clifton-Pittsworth Road)	Bridge and drainage improvements	\$993,922.65	\$1,533,945.10

**Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

**Question no.:** 181

**Program:** 1.1

**Division/Agency:** (LGT) Local Government and Territories

**Topic:** Operation of the NPA

**Proof Hansard Page/s:** 99 (18/11/2013)

**Senator Ludwig asked:**

**Senator LUDWIG:** Have you provided any briefings to ministers about how the NPA operates?

**Ms Fleming:** Yes, we have advised the minister how the NPA operates. We have briefed the minister on what it covers, its history and how it was extended—those elements.

**Senator LUDWIG:** Did that briefing also include a briefing as to how the QRA operates?

**Mr Wilson:** I believe that it did.

**Senator LUDWIG:** Could you check on that and on whether or not it included a briefing as to how the betterment fund works as well. When was that briefing?

**Mr Wilson:** I do not have the details with me.

**Senator LUDWIG:** I am happy for you to take any of this on notice if you want to verify it. It is not a test.

**Mr Wilson:** I would prefer to do that than try and—

**Senator LUDWIG:** Please do. It is not a test. I am simply trying to elicit factual information at this point. As I understand from your earlier answer, it will be the Deputy Prime Minister who will attend the Queensland cabinet meetings. Is that the proposal?

**Ms Fleming:** That is correct.

**Answer:**

The National Disaster Recovery Taskforce has provided the Deputy Prime Minister with a number of briefings on Queensland reconstruction and recovery activities, which included the National Partnership Agreement history and oversight arrangements, including information about the Queensland Reconstruction Authority and Betterment fund.

**Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

**Question no.:** 182

**Program:** Program 4 (DRALGAS PBS Outcome 2)

**Division/Agency:** (LGT) Local Government and Territories

**Topic:** Casino on Christmas Island

**Proof Hansard Page/s:** 102 (18/11/2013)

**Senator Peris asked:**

**Senator PERIS:** Christmas Island, casino? You are aware that at least a couple of groups are interested in building a new casino on Christmas Island?

**Mr Wilkins:** Yes.

**Senator PERIS:** Have you briefed the minister on any of these proposals?

**Mr Wilkins:** Yes, we have briefed the minister on them.

**Senator PERIS:** Has the minister received any correspondence from these proponents?

**Mr Wilson:** I do not believe so.

**Mr Mrdak:** We will take it on notice. We know the issue has been raised. But I am not too sure whether correspondence has been received.

**Answer:**

Neither of the two proponents for a casino has written directly to the Hon Jamie Briggs MP, Assistant Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development.



**Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

**Question no.:** 183

**Program:** Program 4 (DRALGAS Outcome 2)

**Division/Agency:** (LGT) Local Government and Territories

**Topic:** Assessing Aged-care Clients on Christmas Island and Cocos Island

**Proof Hansard Page/s:** 103 (18/11/2013)

**Senator Peris asked:**

**Senator PERIS:** What are the current arrangements for assessing aged-care clients on Christmas Island and Cocos Island for removal to the mainland to live in aged-care facilities such as nursing homes?

**Mr Taloni:** I would have to take that on notice. I do not have the details around how it currently functions.

**Answer:**

Where possible, the needs of aged-care clients are delivered in the client's home. This usually occurs through care by the client's family, Home and Community Care (HACC)-type services and, where required, in Indian Ocean Territories Health Service (IOTHS) facilities.

The assessment of aged-care clients is usually initiated by the family, often in consultation with IOTHS personnel.

A combination of IOTHS personnel and visiting allied health professionals (including occupational therapists and physiotherapists) conduct a medical assessment and a HACC assessment. Future arrangements for the client, including the need to access mainland aged-care facilities, are determined in discussion with the client, their family, IOTHS and a social worker.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

**Question no.:** 184

**Program:** Program 4 (DRALGAS PBS Outcome 2)

**Division/Agency:** (LGT) Local Government and Territories

**Topic:** Public Housing on Christmas Island

**Proof Hansard Page/s:** 104 (18/11/2013)

**Senator Peris asked:**

**Senator PERIS:** Could you please provide me with an outline of the demand for and supply of public housing on Christmas Island?

**Mr Wilson:** I would have to take that on notice to give you an accurate answer.

**Answer:**

There are 119 properties available for public housing purposes on Christmas Island; 3 of these are houses and the remaining 116 are units.

As at 18 December 2013, there is 1 eligible applicant currently on the public housing waiting list.

**Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

**Question no.:** 185

**Program:** Program 4 (DRALGAS PBS Outcome 2)

**Division/Agency:** (LGT) Local Government and Territories

**Topic:** Housing on Christmas Island

**Proof Hansard Page/s:** 104-5 (18/11/2013)

**Senator Peris asked:**

**Senator PERIS:** Thank you. So there were two questions there. That was for public housing and also private housing. Fourteen new units have been recently constructed by the Commonwealth on Christmas Island. Do you know who occupies these units? Are they government employees?

**Ms Fleming:** They are fully let, Senator, but we would have to take on notice the nature of the tenants.

**Answer:**

16 new units have been constructed. These are fully occupied by government employees who deliver essential services on the island (such as education and health).

**Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

**Question no.:** 186

**Program:** Program 4 (DRALGAS PBS Outcome 2)

**Division/Agency:** (LGT) Local Government and Territories

**Topic:** Raising the Sea Wall on Christmas Island

**Proof Hansard Page/s:** 105 (18/11/2013)

**Senator Peris asked:**

**Senator PERIS:** Could you provide me with an outline of the investigation of the matter of raising the sea wall at Flying Fish Cove on Christmas Island?

**Ms Fleming:** I would have to take that on notice.

**Answer:**

The Department engaged WA-based engineering firm, Arup Pty Ltd, to undertake a geotechnical assessment of the existing seawall structure. The resultant report was delivered in May 2012. Please refer to response to QON 187.

**Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

**Question no.:** 187

**Program:** Program 4 (DRALGAS PBS Outcome 2)

**Division/Agency:** (LGT) Local Government and Territories

**Topic:** Funding the Sea Wall on Christmas Island

**Proof Hansard Page/s:** 105 (18/11/2013)

**Senator Peris asked:**

**Senator PERIS:** Does the department investigation recommend that raising the sea wall will mitigate the problem of sand on the road and in the houses of the Malay community at Flying Fish Cove?

**Mr Wilson:** We will provide you with details on notice.

**Senator PERIS:** Has the investigation established the cost to fund the raising of the sea wall? Is the department pursuing funding to raise the sea wall? Finally, have there been any recent discussions and communications with the Shire of Christmas Island and the community of Christmas Island regarding the sea wall?

**Mr Wilson:** The last one I can answer. I understand that our officers on the island have had conversations with regard to the sea wall.

**Answer:**

Please also refer to response to QON 186.

No, the report conducted by Arup Pty Ltd was a geotechnical assessment of the existing structure and did not specifically address raising the seawall. The report did not establish costs to raise the seawall.

The Department, through the Director of the Indian Ocean Territories Administration (located on Christmas Island) has held discussions on the seawall with key stakeholders including the Christmas Island Shire Council, the Islamic Council and the Malay Club, and visited the site to work through community options and suggestions.

**Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

**Question no.:** 188

**Program:** n/a

**Division/Agency:** (LGT) Local Government and Territories

**Topic:** Appointment of new Chief Executive Officer

**Proof Hansard Page/s:** 88 (18/11/2013)

**Senator Lundy asked:**

**Senator LUNDY:** It is galloping along, then. I was going to ask you about the time frame. Can you give an indication about when the process will be concluded and the new CEO announced?

**Mr Mrdak:** I anticipate the panel completing its work in the next two weeks. It will then be a matter for the government as to how they wish to progress the appointment of the chief executive.

**Senator LUNDY:** And what are the skills and expertise that the panel has identified as being prerequisite for such an appointment?

**Mr Mrdak:** The panel has recognised that it is a very unique position, requiring quite a different skill mix. Given the range of activities, the panel is looking for someone with experience in public administration and program and project delivery but also someone who comes with a strong background in planning and an ability in and a good sense of the planning of the National Capital. The panel has some core selection criteria but has drawn widely, and the shortlisting has been established on the basis of people who have a broad range of skills both in public administration and also planning and National Capital issues.

**Senator LUNDY:** Can you provide the committee with the criteria that you are using for the selection?

**Mr Mrdak:** Certainly. I would be happy to take that on notice.

**Answer:**

The selection panel used the following criteria during the recruitment of the CEO of the National Capital Authority. They are based on the criteria applied when selecting for agency heads within the Australia Public Service (APS).

- 1. Demonstrates high level leadership and vision**
  - sets a strategic vision and inspires others to achieve this
  - innovative in dealing with issues
  - articulates a clear direction for their organisation
- 2. Manages large and/or complex operations**
  - achieves results within the context of organisational and/or Government policy
  - strong people management skills
  - strong financial management, ensuring efficient, effective and ethical use of resources
  - understanding of and commitment to quality organisational governance
- 3. Works with others to meet objectives**
  - operates collaboratively with others to meet organisational objectives
  - cultivates productive relationships
  - listens to people and values different perspectives
- 4. High level of judgement**
- 5. Demonstrates a high standard of professional and personal integrity and the capacity to promote these in an organisation.**

**Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**

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**6. Able to negotiate persuasively**

- Approaches negotiations with a strong grasp of key issues
- Negotiates in a convincing and balanced way

**7. Excellent communication skills and the ability to represent the organisation**

- Confidently presents messages to stakeholders and communicates with influence
- Listens, engages and responds to a range of diverse perspectives

(the following criterion was included to accommodate the specific duties of the National Capital Authority Chief Executive role)

**8. Expertise and qualifications in one or more of the following fields:**

- public sector administration or governance;
- business or financial management; or
- planning, urban design, architecture.

**Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

**Question no.:** 189

**Program:** 1.1

**Division/Agency:** (LGT) Local Government and Territories

**Topic:** Betterment Fund

**Proof Hansard Page/s:** Written

**Senator Ludwig asked:**

1. How many projects have been appointed for funding by the Queensland Government (jointly funded with the Commonwealth) for the Betterment Fund announced on 28 February 2013?
  - a. Please list those projects, by type and cost.
  - b. What consultation did the Queensland Government make with the Federal Government on the decision of these projects?
2. Has the Government been requested to increase the size of the Commonwealth's contribution to the Betterment Fund?
  - a. If so, by whom?
  - b. If so, when?
  - c. If so, what action/s has the Government taken to respond to this request? Please detail.
3. Has the Government considered increasing the size of the Commonwealth's contribution to the Betterment Fund?
  - a. If so, by whom is this being considered?
  - b. If so, when was this considered?
  - c. If so, who has been consulted?
  - d. If so, what departments or agencies are involved in the decision?
  - e. If so, what Ministers have been consulted in the decision?
  - f. If so, what action or actions has the government taken to progress this consideration? Please detail.
  - g. If not, why not?
  - h. If not, who has been consulted on the decision not to adopt this as policy?
  - i. If not, when was this considered?
  - j. If not, who has been consulted?
  - k. If not, what departments or agencies were involved in the decision not to adopt the policy?
  - l. If not, what Ministers have been consulted in the decision not to adopt the policy?
  - m. If not, what action or actions has the government taken in the decision not to progress this? Please detail.



**Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

4. Has the Deputy Prime Minister made any requests or consideration of request to the Minister, Prime Minister or any other Minister seeking to increase the size of the Betterment Fund?
  - a. If so, how has the Deputy Prime Minister made that request?
  - b. If so, when was this considered?
  - c. If so, who has been consulted?
  - d. If so, what departments or agencies are involved in the request?
  - e. If so, what Ministers have been consulted in the request?
  - f. If so, what action or actions has the government taken to progress this? Please detail.
  - g. If not, why not?
  - h. If not, who has been consulted on the decision not to adopt this as policy?
  - i. If not, when was this considered?
  - j. If not, who has been consulted?
  - k. If not, what departments or agencies were involved in the decision not to adopt the policy?
  - l. If not, what Ministers have been consulted in the decision not to adopt the policy?
  - m. If not, what action or actions has the government taken in the decision not to progress this? Please detail.

**Answer:**

1. As at 26 November 2013, the Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA) reports that it had approved betterment projects for 27 local government authorities valued at \$97.1 million, comprising \$46.1 million from the Betterment Fund, \$42.8 million in restoration funding (Category B) and \$8.2 million in council contributions. QRA manages the fund and prioritises projects; the Commonwealth receives notification when a submission has been approved for funding.

A list of approved projects, including type and cost, is at **Attachment A**.

2. No formal requests have been made to the current government to increase the Betterment Fund.
3. As no request has been made to increase the Betterment Fund, no decision or consultation has been required on this matter.
4. No, the Deputy Prime Minister has not made any requests to increase the size of the Betterment Fund.

**189 – Attachment A – List of approved Betterment Fund projects**

Local Government Authority	Description of works	Type of project	Approved NDRRA Category B value	Approved Betterment component
North Burnett Regional Council	Gayndah Water Supply Intake	Relocation of the water treatment plant	\$2,634,117.30	\$1,195,782.00
Bundaberg Regional Council	Barretts Road	Floodway improvements	\$49,291.38	\$155,000.00
Bundaberg Regional Council	Blacks Road	Floodway improvements	\$22,721.25	\$96,168.13
Bundaberg Regional Council	Gentle Annie Road Bridge	Bridge protection works	\$138,218.40	\$130,000.00

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<b>Local Government Authority</b>	<b>Description of works</b>	<b>Type of project</b>	<b>Approved NDRRA Category B value</b>	<b>Approved Betterment component</b>
Southern Burnett Regional Council	Mondure Wheatlands Road	Drainage and road protection	\$227,429.16	\$181,926.84
Fraser Coast Regional Council	Poona Road, Moorabinda Drive, River Heads Road, Cherry Tree Road and Boundary Road	Drainage and floodway improvements	\$499,670.10	\$1,886,596.72
Gympie Regional Council	Doyle Road, Glastonbury Creek Road, Greendale Road, Moorhouse Gully Road and Moy Pocket Road	Floodway improvements	\$557,494.95	\$1,080,696.00
Bundaberg Regional Council	Bucca Road	Road and drainage improvements	\$1,798,525.35	\$1,123,734.65
Ipswich City Council	One Mile Bridge	Drainage improvements and embankment protection	\$1,525,262.44	\$1,919,196.64
Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council	Upper Mt Bentley Road	Sealing the road	\$358,447.60	\$438,998.00
Burdekin Shire Council	Comisky Road	Drainage improvements	\$38,698.75	\$155,752.03
Cherbourg Aboriginal Shore Council	Cherbourg Road and the raw water Abstraction Station	Relocation of the water station	\$346,430.25	\$277,756.75
Gladstone Regional Council	Oyster Creek Road	Drainage improvements	\$783,108.75	\$153,940.00
Lockyer Valley Regional Council (two projects)	Caffey Connection Road and Dairy Bridge	Drainage, floodway and bridge protection works	\$174,030.00	\$123,131.80
South Burnett Regional Council	Heading Road, Pound Street and Geritz Road	Drainage and road protection	\$1,221,994.00	\$170,473.37
North Burnett Regional Council	Monto Wastewater Recycling Tanks	Water tank improvements	\$91,125.00	\$74,603.00
Tablelands Regional Council	Boar Pocket Road	Drainage improvements	\$187,266.33	\$220,720.61
South Burnett Regional Council	River Road	Road protection and floodway improvements	\$255,329.45	\$517,869.54
Gladstone Regional Council	Turkey Beach Road and Round Hill Road	Drainage improvements	\$463,005.78	\$760,082.91

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**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

<b>Local Government Authority</b>	<b>Description of works</b>	<b>Type of project</b>	<b>Approved NDRRA Category B value</b>	<b>Approved Betterment component</b>
Ipswich City Council	Old One Mile Bridge, Keanes Road Bridge, Hancock Bridge	Bridge protection works	\$274,963.51	\$95,297.97
Moreton Bay Regional Council (four projects)	Margate Parade, Wirth Road and Maba Court	Establishment of a sea wall, drainage improvements and bridge protection	\$890,602.87	\$1,778,869.47
Aurukun Shire Council	Aurukun Access Road	Road improvements	\$469,874.00	\$1,215,000.00
Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council	Elim Beach Road	Road improvements	\$294,497.50	\$1,506,966.50
Lockyer Valley Regional Council (two projects)	Thistlethwaite Bridge	Bridge improvements and protection works	\$446,424.89	\$1,259,160.11
Ipswich City Council	Colleges Crossing	Asset protection works	\$2,369,193.02	\$1,460,167.54
North Burnett Regional Council	Gayndah-Mundubbera Road	Road and drainage improvements	\$6,785,707.00	\$1,971,764.70
Fraser Coast Regional Council	Yerra Road, Dakins Road, and Arborthree Road (Rocky Creek Floodway)	Floodway and bridge protection works	\$265,820.29	\$299,125.48
Yarrabah Shire Council	Yarrabah Range Road , Buddabadoo Road, and Bilma Road	Floodway improvements	\$1,864,121.20	\$272,988.36
South Burnett Regional Council (two projects)	Silverleaf Road, Kumbia Road, Jerrards Road and Aerodome Road	Floodway and road improvements	\$1,436,837.34	\$859,409.66
Gladstone Regional Council	Gladstone Regional Council – Blackmans Gap Road	Drainage improvements	\$651,427.74	\$602,868.12

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

<b>Local Government Authority</b>	<b>Description of works</b>	<b>Type of project</b>	<b>Approved NDRRA Category B value</b>	<b>Approved Betterment component</b>
Rockhampton Regional Council	Upper Ulam Road, Joskeleigh Road, Old Byfield Road, Hoys Road, Black Gin Creek Road, Manns Road, Leaholme Road, Collins Road, Smith Road, Venture Road, Bycroft Road, Dunning Road, Kalapa-Black Mountain Road, Flaherty Road, Weir Park Road, San Jose Road, Wild Road, and Hopkins Road.	Floodway and road improvements	\$808,597.96	\$906,384.80
Bundaberg Regional Council	Coonarr Road, Wallaville Goondoon Road (Sheepstation Creek), Heales Road, Miara Road, Wallaville Goondoon Road and Top Waterloo Road	Floodway and road improvements	\$1,566,961.20	\$913,942.38
Bundaberg Regional Council	Halford Drive and Marshall Avenue	Floodway and road improvements	\$160,042.50	\$553,052.40
Logan City Council	Chambers Flat Road	Floodway and road improvements	\$65,470.50	\$182,888.24
Moreton Bay Regional Council	Pringles Road	Floodway and road improvements	\$51,152.59	\$567,367.16
Scenic Rim Regional Council	Biddaddabba Creek Road and Villis Bridge	Bridge improvements and protection works	\$2,282,700.17	\$251,813.78
Central Highlands Regional Council	Brolga Gully Road, Conomarra Road, Raby Creek Road, Maddens Road, Taylors Creek Road, Conciliation Creek Road, Spring Hill Road, Eightmile Road, Malvern Road, and Wyuna Road	Floodway improvements	\$449,947.98	\$832,693.77

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**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

<b>Local Government Authority</b>	<b>Description of works</b>	<b>Type of project</b>	<b>Approved NDRRA Category B value</b>	<b>Approved Betterment component</b>
Western Downs Regional Council	Pelican Back Road; Clifford Road, Kangaroo Creek; Roche Creek Road	Drainage, bridge and floodway improvements.	\$324,297.00	\$760,652.00
Burdekin Shire Council	Phillips Camp Road and Rifle Range Road	Drainage and floodway improvements	\$135,331.09	\$185,156.10
Somerset Regional Council (three projects)	Rocky Gully Road Lake Manchester Road, Esk-Crows Nest Road (Bowdon Crossing), Summerville Road East (Burtons Bridge), Cressbrook-Caboonbah Road (Seftons Crossing), Banks Creek Road (Savages Crossing), Ivory Creek Road (George Bell Crossing), Esk-Crows Nest Road (Ted Skinner Crossing).	Drainage, bridge and floodway improvements.	\$3,140,379.88	\$1,281,804.22
Etheridge Shire Council	Oak Park Road	Drainage improvements	\$465,153.30	\$647,122.51
Tablelands Regional Council	Sutties Gap Road	Road protection works	\$81,784.80	\$162,313.66
North Burnett Regional Council (two projects)	22 floodways across 2 roads: Boondooma Road and Kariboe Road	Floodway improvements	\$91,753.48	\$1,578,994.06
Somerset Regional Council (two projects)	Mt Stanley Road (crossings 8 and 10) Arababy Creek Road (Allery's Bridge), and Diaper Road (crossing 1 and 2)	Drainage and floodway improvements	\$512,880.18	\$770,004.88
Bundaberg Regional Council	Kendalls Flat Weir	Weir protection works	\$166,271.40	\$1,870,774.80
Toowoomba Regional Council	Pipeline Road, Leslie Bridge Road, Ironbark Road, Ravensbourne Dip Road, and Glenvale Road	Drainage improvements	\$378,533.26	\$1,746,128.23

**Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

<b>Local Government Authority</b>	<b>Description of works</b>	<b>Type of project</b>	<b>Approved NDRRA Category B value</b>	<b>Approved Betterment component</b>
Carpentaria Shire Council	Mitchell River Crossing	Floodway protection works	\$871,882.70	\$530,428.30
Southern Downs Regional Council	North Branch Road	Road and drainage improvements	\$136,107.83	\$283,278.27
Cassowary Coast Regional Council	Ellerbeek Road, Fishers Creek Road, Schumann Road	Road and drainage improvements	\$638,284.05	\$512,753.46
Toowoomba Regional Council	Trapp Road, McGreevy Road, O'Conner Road	Drainage and floodway improvements	\$246,560.13	\$875,246.00
South Burnett Regional Council	Kingaroy Trunk Sewer	Sewer pipe improvements	\$213,193.35	\$1,418,997.85
South Burnett Regional Council	Kengoon Road, Tamrookum Church Road	Road and drainage improvements	\$278,471.52	\$798,496.86
Banana Shire Council	McCanns Road and Linkes Road	Road and drainage improvements	\$445,217.67	\$768,068.91
Toowoomba Regional Council	Ootann Road	Floodway and road improvements	\$134,661.00	\$385,172.85
Toowoomba Regional Council	Kingsthorpe Haden Road Bridge	Bridge improvements and protection works	\$460,614.00	\$1,995,620.10
Toowoomba Regional Council	Greenwattle Street and Nukku Road	Road and drainage improvements	\$366,372.75	\$1,606,376.00
Toowoomba Regional Council (two projects)	Western Creek-Bulli Creek Road and Hodgson Creek Bridge (Clifton-Pittsworth Road)	Bridge and drainage improvements	\$993,922.65	\$1,533,945.10

**Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

**Question no.:** 190

**Program:** 1.1

**Division/Agency:** (LGT) Local Government and Territories

**Topic:** Increase to the Betterment Fund

**Proof Hansard Page/s:** Written

**Senator Ludwig asked:**

On Tuesday 30 April, the now-Deputy Prime Minister was quoted as saying an increase to the betterment fund would mean "any new expenditure is going to have to be offset by savings in other areas."

- a. What expenditure will be cut to offset the decision to increase the fund?
- b. When was this decision taken?
- c. When will this be announced?
- d. Who has been consulted on this decision?
- e. What departments or agencies are involved in the decision?
- f. What Ministers have been consulted in the decision?
- g. If the expenditure won't be offset, why not?
- h. If the expenditure won't be offset, who has been consulted on the decision not to adopt this as policy?
- i. If the expenditure won't be offset, when was this considered?
- j. If the expenditure won't be offset, who has been consulted?
- k. If the expenditure won't be offset, what departments or agencies were involved in the decision not to adopt the policy?
- l. If the expenditure won't be offset, what Ministers have been consulted in the decision not to adopt the policy?
- m. If the expenditure won't be offset, what action or actions has the government taken in the decision not to progress this? Please detail.

**Answer:**

No decision on increasing betterment funding has been made. Any new expenditure will need to be considered through the usual government budget process.

**Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

**Question no.:** 191

**Program:** 1.1

**Division/Agency:** (LGT) Local Government and Territories

**Topic:** More Support for Flood Recovery

**Proof Hansard Page/s:** Written

**Senator Ludwig asked:**

On Tuesday 30 April, the now-Deputy Prime Minister was quoted as replying “yes” to a query by the ABC if “a Coalition Government (would) be prepared to provide more support for flood recovery”.

Is this government policy?

- a. If so, what is being done to implement that policy?
- b. If so, by whom is this being considered or implemented?
- c. If so, when was this considered or implemented?
- d. If so, who has been consulted?
- e. If so, what departments or agencies are involved in the policy?
- f. If so, what Ministers have been consulted in the policy?
- g. If so, what action or actions has the government taken to progress this policy? Please detail.
- h. If not, why not?
- i. If not, who has been consulted on the decision not to adopt this as policy?
- j. If not, when was this considered?
- k. If not, who has been consulted?
- l. If not, what departments or agencies were involved in the decision not to adopt the policy?
- m. If not, what Ministers have been consulted in the decision not to adopt the policy?
- n. If not, what action or actions has the government taken in the decision not to progress this? Please detail.

**Answer:**

The government continues to provide exceptional circumstances funding to Queensland through the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA) for the 2010-11 and 2013 flood and cyclone disaster events.

Under the NDRRA any additional funding for Category D exceptional circumstances measures need to be specifically requested by the state. Where requests are made they will be considered on merit.



**Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

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**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

**Question no.:** 192

**Program:** 1.1

**Division/Agency:** (LGT) Local Government and Territories

**Topic:** Flood Proof Assets

**Proof Hansard Page/s:** Written

**Senator Ludwig asked:**

On Tuesday 30 April, the now-Deputy Prime Minister was also quoted as saying “Well, clearly a lot more money would need to be spent if we're going to flood-proof assets across the nation.”

- a. By how much extra is the commonwealth going to increase the Betterment Fund?
- b. When was this decision taken?
- c. When will this be announced?
- d. Who has been consulted on this decision?
- e. What departments or agencies are involved in the decision?
- f. What Ministers have been consulted in the decision?
- g. If the fund won't be increased, why not?
- h. If the fund won't be increased, who has been consulted on the decision not to adopt this as policy?
- i. If the fund won't be increased, when was this considered?
- j. If the fund won't be increased, who has been consulted?
- k. If the fund won't be increased, what departments or agencies were involved in the decision not to adopt the policy?
- l. If the fund won't be increased, what Ministers have been consulted in the decision not to adopt the policy?
- m. If the fund won't be increased, what action or actions has the government taken in the decision not to progress this? Please detail.

**Answer:**

The current betterment fund is managed by the Queensland Government under the National Partnership Agreement for Natural Disaster Reconstruction and Recovery. There are still funds available under this initiative and the Queensland Government has not formally requested an increase since the fund was agreed.

**Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

**Question no.:** 193

**Program:** 1.1

**Division/Agency:** (LGT) Local Government and Territories

**Topic:** Queensland Natural Disasters - Oversight

**Proof Hansard Page/s:** Written

**Senator Ludwig asked:**

Is the Deputy Prime Minister responsible for oversight of the Commonwealth's contribution to the Queensland natural disasters in 2011 and 2013?

a. If not, who is?

**Answer:**

Yes. In line with the National Partnership Agreement for Natural Disaster Reconstruction and Recovery, the Deputy Prime Minister is responsible for the oversight of the Commonwealth's contribution to the Queensland flood and cyclone natural disasters that occurred in 2010-13.

**Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

**Question no.:** 194

**Program:** 1.1

**Division/Agency:** (LGT) Local Government and Territories

**Topic:** Commonwealth National Disaster Recovery Taskforce

**Proof Hansard Page/s:** Written

**Senator Ludwig asked:**

Is the Deputy Prime Minister responsible for the Commonwealth National Disaster Recovery Taskforce?

- a. If not, who is?
- b. What department is the Commonwealth National Disaster Recovery Taskforce contained?

**Answer:**

Yes. The Deputy Prime Minister has portfolio responsibility for the National Disaster Recovery Taskforce, which sits within the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development.

**Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

**Question no.:** 195

**Program:** 1.1

**Division/Agency:** (LGT) Local Government and Territories

**Topic:** Australian Government Reconstruction Inspectorate

**Proof Hansard Page/s:** Written

**Senator Ludwig asked:**

Is the Deputy Prime Minister responsible for the Australian Government Reconstruction Inspectorate?

- a. If not, who is?
- b. What department is the Australian Government Reconstruction Inspectorate contained in?

**Answer:**

No. The Australian Government Reconstruction Inspectorate (Inspectorate) reports directly to the Prime Minister.

Secretariat support for the Inspectorate is provided by the National Disaster Recovery Taskforce, which sits within the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development.

**Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

**Question no.:** 196

**Program:** 1.1

**Division/Agency:** (LGT) Local Government and Territories

**Topic:** Queensland Flood Recovery

**Proof Hansard Page/s:** Written

**Senator Ludwig asked:**

What is the Minister's vision for Queensland Floods Recovery?

**Answer:**

The Deputy Prime Minister remains committed to working with Queensland to support the recovery of communities affected by the flood and cyclone disaster events of 2010-13.

**Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2013

**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

**Question no.:** 197

**Program:** 1.1

**Division/Agency:** (LGT) Local Government and Territories

**Topic:** Queensland Reconstruction Authority

**Proof Hansard Page/s:** Written

**Senator Ludwig asked:**

Has the Deputy Prime Minister contacted the Queensland Reconstruction Authority (the QRA)?

- a. If so, how did the Minister contact the QRA?
- b. What was the nature of the contact?
- c. What did issues did the Minister raise with the QRA?
- d. What was the QRA's response?
- e. Has the Minister met in person with the QRA?
- f. If so, who?
- g. If so, when?
- h. If so, what did they discuss?
- i. What did issues did the Minister raise with the QRA?
- j. What was the QRA's response?
- k. When will the Minister next make contact with the QRA?
- l. If not, why not?

**Answer:**

The Deputy Prime Minister has not been in direct contact with the Queensland Reconstruction Authority. The Deputy Prime Minister has been in contact with Minister Crisafulli, the Queensland Minister for Local Government, Community Recovery and Resilience regarding the reconstruction and recovery programme, and broader infrastructure matters.

**Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

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**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

**Question no.:** 198

**Program:** 1.1

**Division/Agency:** (LGT) Local Government and Territories

**Topic:** Contact with Queensland Minister for Local Government, Community Recovery and Resilience

**Proof Hansard Page/s:** Written

**Senator Ludwig asked:**

Since being sworn in as Minister, has the Deputy Prime Minister contacted with the Queensland Minister for Local Government, Community Recovery and Resilience (the state Minister)?

- a. If so, how did the Minister contact the state Minister?
- b. What was the nature of the contact?
- c. What did issues did the Minister raise with the state Minister?
- d. What was the state Minister's response?
- e. Have the two met in person?
- f. If so, when?
- g. If so, what did they discuss?
- h. What did issues did the Minister raise with the state Minister?
- i. What was the state Minister's response?
- j. When will the Minister next make contact with the state Minister?
- k. If not, why not?

**Answer:**

As Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development, the Deputy Prime Minister is in regular contact with his portfolio counterparts in the states and territories; including the Queensland Minister for Local Government, Community Recovery and Resilience the Hon David Crisafulli MP.

Specifically, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister Crisafulli met on 8 November 2013, where they discussed a range of mutual portfolio issues. The ministers will meet as required in the future.

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**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

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**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

**Question no.:** 199

**Program:** 1.1

**Division/Agency:** (LGT) Local Government and Territories

**Topic:** Contact with the Commonwealth National Disaster Recovery Taskforce

**Proof Hansard Page/s:** Written

**Senator Ludwig asked:**

Since being sworn in as Minister, has the Deputy Prime Minister contacted or been contacted by the Commonwealth National Disaster Recovery Taskforce (the Taskforce)?

- a. If so, how did the Minister contact the Taskforce?
- b. What was the nature of the contact?
- c. What did issues did the Minister raise with the Taskforce?
- d. Has the Minister met the Taskforce in person?
- e. If so, when?
- f. If so, what did they discuss?
- g. What did issues did the Minister raise with the Taskforce?
- h. When will the Minister next make contact with the Taskforce
- i. If not, why not?

**Answer:**

The Deputy Prime Minister has portfolio responsibility for the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development; including the National Disaster Recovery Taskforce (Taskforce).

The Deputy Prime Minister has been fully briefed by the Department on matters relating to natural disaster reconstruction.



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**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

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**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

**Question no.:** 200

**Program:** 1.1

**Division/Agency:** (LGT) Local Government and Territories

**Topic:** Contact with the Australian Government Reconstruction Inspectorate

**Proof Hansard Page/s:** Written

**Senator Ludwig asked:**

Since being sworn in as Minister, has the Deputy Prime Minister contacted or been contacted by the Australian Government Reconstruction Inspectorate (the Inspectorate)?

- a. If so, how did the Minister contact the Inspectorate?
- b. What was the nature of the contact?
- c. What did issues did the Minister raise with the Inspectorate?
- d. Has the Minister met the Taskforce in person?
- e. If so, who?
- f. If so, when?
- g. If so, what did they discuss?
- h. What did issues did the Minister raise with the Inspectorate?
- i. When will the Minister next make contact with the Inspectorate?
- j. If not, why not?

**Answer:**

The Deputy Prime Minister is responsible for overseeing the Commonwealth's additional oversight of reconstruction and recovery in Queensland and Victoria and in this capacity has contact with the Australian Government Reconstruction Inspectorate.

The Deputy Prime Minister met with the Chair of the Australian Government Reconstruction Inspectorate (Inspectorate), the Hon John Fahey AC, on Tuesday 10 December 2013 to discuss the Inspectorate and reconstruction progress in both Queensland and Victoria.

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**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

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**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

**Question no.:** 201

**Program:** 1.1

**Division/Agency:** (LGT) Local Government and Territories

**Topic:** Contact with the Queensland Treasurer

**Proof Hansard Page/s:** Written

**Senator Ludwig asked:**

Since being sworn in as Minister, has the Deputy Prime Minister contacted with the Queensland Treasurer (the state Treasurer)?

- a. If so, how did the Minister contact the state Treasurer?
- b. What was the nature of the contact?
- c. What did issues did the Minister raise with the state Treasurer?
- d. What was the state Treasurer's response?
- e. Have the two met in person?
- f. If so, when?
- g. If so, what did they discuss?
- h. What did issues did the Minister raise with the state Treasurer?
- i. What was the state Treasurer's response?
- j. When will the Minister next make contact with the state Treasurer?
- k. If not, why not?

**Answer:**

As the Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development, the Deputy Prime Minister is in regular contact with his Queensland ministerial counterparts to discuss a broad range of matters including the reconstruction and recovery programme.

The Department is not aware of a formal meeting between the Deputy Prime Minister and the Queensland Treasurer.

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**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

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**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

**Question no.:** 202

**Program:** 1.1

**Division/Agency:** (LGT) Local Government and Territories

**Topic:** Contact with the Queensland Premier

**Proof Hansard Page/s:** Written

**Senator Ludwig asked:**

Since being sworn in as Minister, has the Deputy Prime Minister contacted with the Queensland Premier (the state Premier)?

- a. If so, how did the Minister contact the state Premier?
- b. What was the nature of the contact?
- c. What did issues did the Minister raise with the Premier?
- d. What was the Premier's response?
- e. Have the two met in person?
- f. If so, when?
- g. If so, what did they discuss?
- h. What did issues did the Minister raise with the Premier?
- i. What was the Premier's response?
- j. When will the Minister next make contact with the Premier?
- k. If not, why not?

**Answer:**

As the Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development, the Deputy Prime Minister is in regular contact with his Queensland ministerial counterparts to discuss a broad range of matters including the reconstruction and recovery programme.

The Department is not aware of a formal meeting between the Deputy Prime Minister and the Queensland Premier.

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**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

**Question no.:** 203

**Program:** 1.1

**Division/Agency:** (LGT) Local Government and Territories

**Topic:** National Partnership Agreement for Natural Disaster Reconstruction and Recovery

**Proof Hansard Page/s:** Written

**Senator Ludwig asked:**

1. Is the National Partnership Agreement for Natural Disaster Reconstruction and Recovery (the Agreement) still in effect?
  - a. If not, why?
  - b. If not, at whose direction was the agreement ended?
  - c. If not, who has been consulted on the decision to end the agreement?
  - d. If not, when was this considered?
  - e. If not, who has been consulted?
  - f. If not, what departments or agencies were involved in the decision end the agreement?
  - g. If not, what Ministers have been consulted in the decision to end the agreement?
  - h. If not, what action or actions has the government taken in the decision to end the agreement? Please detail.
2. Has the Deputy Prime Minister sought a briefing on the National Partnership Agreement for Natural Disaster Reconstruction and Recovery?
  - a. If so, by whom?
  - b. If so, when?
  - c. If so, in what format was the briefing delivered?
  - d. If so, what follow up if any did the minister request after the briefing?
  - e. If so, please provide a copy
  - f. If not, why?
3. Have any amendments been made to the National Partnership Agreement for Natural Disaster Reconstruction and Recovery since it was signed on 8 February 2013?  
If so, please list them, the date they were signed, the date they were made effective and by which jurisdiction the amendments were suggested or initiated.
4. Have any amendments to the National Partnership Agreement for Natural Disaster Reconstruction and Recovery been proposed but not adopted since 7 September 2013? If so, please list them, the date they were proposed, by whom they were proposed and why they were not adopted.

**Answer:**

1. Yes. The National Partnership Agreement (NPA) for Natural Disaster Reconstruction and Recovery is still in effect.
2. The National Disaster Recovery Taskforce has provided the Deputy Prime Minister with a number of briefings on Queensland reconstruction and recovery activities which included the National Partnership Agreement and oversight arrangements.
3. Yes. In May 2013, the Queensland Treasurer wrote to the former Commonwealth Treasurer, requesting that the NPA be extended to include all flooding and storm events between February and June 2013. These events impacted a similar area to the January 2013 flooding. The

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Queensland Treasurer also requested that the betterment fund and day labour trial, established under the NPA, were also extended to these events.

On 5 August 2013 the former Minister for Emergency Management, the Hon Mark Dreyfus QC MP, agreed to amendments to the NPA to include the disaster events in February and March 2013. The requested amendments have been enacted through a schedule to the NPA.

4. Yes. The Queensland Minister for Local Government, Community Recovery and Resilience has requested an extension of the current day labour trial to include assets damaged in the 2012 flooding and storm events. The request is under consideration.

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**Question no.:** 204

**Program:** 1.1

**Division/Agency:** (LGT) Local Government and Territories

**Topic:** Queensland Disaster Recovery Cabinet Committee

**Proof Hansard Page/s:** Written

**Senator Ludwig asked:**

Has the Deputy Prime Minister participated in the Queensland Disaster Recovery Cabinet Committee?

- a. If yes, when?
- b. If yes, where was the meeting held?
- c. If yes, what was discussed?
- d. If yes, what did the Minister raise?
- e. If yes, what outcomes came from the meeting?
- f. If yes, what public announcements came from the meeting?
- g. If not, why not?
- h. If not, what has the Minister done to seek redress this breach the National Partnership Agreement for Natural Disaster Reconstruction and Recovery?

**Answer:**

No. The Deputy Prime Minister was not available to attend the last Queensland Recovery Cabinet Committee meeting (now the Disaster Management Committee of Cabinet). The Deputy Prime Minister has met with the Queensland Minister for Local Government, Community Recovery and Resilience (who is the Chair of the DMCC) to discuss reconstruction and recovery activities in Queensland.

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**Question no.:** 205

**Program:** 1.1

**Division/Agency:** (LGT) Local Government and Territories

**Topic:** Funding Allocation for the Australian Government Reconstruction Inspectorate

**Proof Hansard Page/s:** Written

**Senator Ludwig asked:**

What is the current funding allocation for the Australian Government Reconstruction Inspectorate?

**Answer:**

In the Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS) the National Disaster Recovery Taskforce's current funding allocation for 2013-14 is \$5.328 million and for 2014-15 is \$4.281 million. This includes funding to support the Australian Government Reconstruction Inspectorate.

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**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

**Question no.:** 206

**Program:** 1.1

**Division/Agency:** (LGT) Local Government and Territories

**Topic:** Funding Allocation for the Australian Government Floods Taskforce

**Proof Hansard Page/s:** Written

**Senator Ludwig asked:**

What is the current funding allocation for the Australian Government Floods Taskforce?

**Answer:**

In the Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS) the National Disaster Recovery Taskforce's and the Australian Government Reconstruction Inspectorate current funding allocation for 2013-14 is \$5.328 million and for 2014-15 is \$4.281 million. This includes funding to support the Australian Government Reconstruction Inspectorate.