

ABORIGINAL HOUSING, NORTH WEST

470. Mr L. Graham to the Minister representing the Minister for Housing and Works

I refer to the Aboriginal housing budget announced in September last year and ask: -

- (a) how much of the proposed \$31.2 million is to be spent on programs in the North West of the State;
- (b) in which towns and communities will the funds be spent;
- (c) who will be responsible for administering the funds; and
- (d) when will the programs commence operation in each town referred to above?

Ms A.J. MacTIERNAN replied:

In reference to the Aboriginal housing budget for 2002/03:

- (a) How much of the proposed \$31.2 million is to be spent on programs in the North West of the State?

The budget for the Aboriginal Housing and Infrastructure Unit (AHIU) within the Department of Housing and Works (DHW) for 2002/03 has been revised to \$46.2 million. Much of the increase is related to the recently signed Bi-lateral Agreement for the Provision of Housing and Infrastructure for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People in Western Australia, July 2002 to June 2007. The Agreement is between the State, Commonwealth and ATSIC and provides for increased commitments from the State and the transfer of Commonwealth ATSIC funds to the State to be administered by the AHIU.

In 2002/2003, 74% of this budget is to be expended in the North West of the State, amounting to an estimated expenditure of \$34.2 million. The North West refers to the DHW Kimberley and Pilbara regions and includes the ATSIC Regions of Wunan, Kullari, Malarabah and the northern part of the Western Desert region.

(Note – the budget does not include expenditure under the mainstream Homeswest rental program, for example, public housing construction in Broome etc).

- (b) In which towns and communities will the funds be spent?

Within the North West funds will be expended in 79 communities, including three townships. A list of the communities is appended which details proposed expenditure in each community by program. [See paper No 461.]

- (c) Who will be responsible for administering the funds?

Under the Bi-lateral Agreement the Aboriginal Housing and Infrastructure Unit within the Department of Housing and Works will have overall responsibility for program administration. In 2002/03 this includes responsibility for almost \$11 million of ATSIC Community Housing and Infrastructure Program funds which will come across under the Agreement to pool funds and rationalise program administration. Within the AHIU a number of program management models are adopted across the various programs to allow devolution of areas of responsibility to Aboriginal communities, businesses and resourcing agencies wherever this is feasible.

- (d) When will the programs commence operation in each town referred to above?

Under the Management Support and Management Incentive Programs grants are dispersed quarterly to communities subject to satisfactory disbursement of previous allocations and inspection of upgrading works to ensure quality control. This is an ongoing process.

Under the Remote Areas Essential Services Program the servicing and maintenance contracts are ongoing with regional service providers under a contract management arrangement with ARUP. All communities under the RAESP have continuous ongoing service.

Under the Community Construction Program and the ATSIC CHIP, around 40% of construction and upgrade contracts have been let, with the balance to be let over the next 4 months.

Under the Town Reserves Regularisation Program Community Layout Plans are currently being completed for the East Kimberley township reserves. These will be lodged with the WA Planning Commission by January 2003. Capital upgrades will commence late in the 02/03 financial year. With respect to the West Kimberley projects the tender to prepare the Community Layout Plans will be let in

November and the completed Plans will be lodged with the WA Planning Commission late in the 02/03 F/Y with capital works upgrades scheduled for 2003/04.

Under the Fixing Houses For Better Health Program the first “survey and fix” process has been completed in all communities. The second round fix will be undertaken in March 2003.

Under the Aboriginal Communities Strategic Investment Program (ACSIP) there are a number of ongoing community governance and infrastructure initiatives. Funding for staffing support is acquitted six monthly.

Under the Roebourne Enhancement Scheme, the extent of requirements is currently being assessed. A scope of works will be prepared by December with tenders likely to be called early in the new year.