

DROUGHT RELIEF - STATE ASSISTANCE

1135. Hon NIGEL HALLETT to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:

Further to my question without notice 1078 of Thursday, 16 November about country businesses -

- (1) How many payments have been made to farmers under the dry season package for payments to local businesses?
- (2) With regard to shire and government capital works programs, is it known how much has been paid to local businesses under these programs?
- (3)
 - (a) What help, apart from advisory services, has the Small Business Development Commission given regional small businesses; and
 - (b) at what turnover level does a business cease to be called small?
- (4) Will the minister table the results of the dry season questionnaire?

Hon KIM CHANCE replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question. This must be a day for long answers. I table the answer and seek leave for it to be incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

[See paper 2283.]

The following material was incorporated -

1. There have been approvals for 16 farmers under the 2006 Dry Season Assistance Package. Experience shows that the bulk of applications are likely to come in the period after the completion of harvest (during January to March).

2. While I cannot provide specific detail regarding how much has been paid to local business under various capital works initiatives, I can provide some examples of the opportunities that have been taken and are available.

- The Minister for Planning and Infrastructure, Alannah MacTiernan, recently announced that dry season affected farmers will have opportunities to work on the upgrade of the Mimegarra Road project in the Shire of Dandaragan. The Shire of Dandaragan has commenced this work, in conjunction with Main Roads, and has engaged some 15 farmers under contract for aspects of the work. The value of this project is around \$4 million. Main Roads is also using the Shire of Gingin to deliver works on the Brand Highway valued at around \$1 million.

- A number of the 12 shires in the dry season declared area have also sought to utilise the \$3 million of 2006/07 funding available to them under the Federal Roads to Recovery program to engage local farmers to deliver services.

3(a) The small Business Development Corporation is the responsibility of my colleague, the Minister for Small Business.

The response to this question has been provided by the Small Business Development Corporation.

Small Business Centres

The SBDC manages the new Small Business Centre network throughout the State.

The Centres have now been established in 19 regional centres from Esperance to Kununurra providing support and facilitation services for new and existing small businesses in regional Western Australia. Each Centre is managed by a local voluntary Chair and Committee members that assist the Small Business Centre Manager.

Where specialist knowledge is required in areas such as Commercial Tenancy and Franchising, Centres clients are referred to specialists at the SBDC.

Small Business Initiatives Fund

The Small Business Initiatives Fund (SBIF) provides a project funding source for the exclusive use of the Small Business Centre Network. The fund enables Centres to identify local business needs, develop project proposals aimed at addressing those needs and deliver business development initiatives throughout their region.

For the year to 30 June 2006, \$191,458 was approved to support the delivery of locally developed initiatives by Small Business Centres throughout the State.

3(b) Under the *Small Business Development Corporation Act 1983* a small business is not defined by reference to turnover.

A 'small business' means a business undertaking -

- (a) which is wholly owned and operated by an individual person or by individual persons in partnership or by a proprietary company within the meaning of the *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth and which
 - (i) has a relatively small share of the market in which it competes;
 - (ii) is managed personally by the owner or owners or directors, as the case requires; and
 - (iii) is not a subsidiary of, or does not form part of, a larger business or enterprise; or
- (b) which is declared by the Governor by Order in Council pursuant to subsection (2) to be a small business for the purposes of this Act.

Extract from *Hansard*
[COUNCIL - Thursday, 23 November 2006]
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Hon Nigel Hallett; Hon Kim Chance

The Governor may, by Order in Council published in the *Government Gazette*, declare a business undertaking to be a small business for the purposes of this Act and by subsequent Order in Council so published vary or revoke that declaration.

4. The survey was conducted by the Small Business Development Corporation and the results would be available through the Minister for Small Business.
