

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ESTIMATES COMMITTEE B

Date of Hearing: 17 November 2020

Daily *Hansard* page No. (if available):

Division No.: 16: Primary Industries and Regional Development – Services 1 to 5, Regional Development

Question:

B1. Hon Steve Thomas MLC – Royalties for Regions expenditure for Remote Aboriginal Communities

- (1) (a) Why has funding to remote communities been segmented into two different categories (*note – the question refers to the Remote and Essential Services and Remote Aboriginal Communities line items on page 178 of BP3*).
- (b) Which parts of each of these funds were to cover Commonwealth investment that has been withdrawn?

Answer:

- (1) (a) The funding for remote communities is shown as two separate line items on the Royalties for Regions budget due to different purposes. The line item “Remote and Essential Services” provides for provision of power, water and wastewater management services, planned maintenance and breakdown service; water quality testing; provision of powerhouse fuel; capital replacement for planned asset management and critical upgrades or replacements for the provision of essential and municipal services; and local government type services including the provision and upkeep of roads, airstrips, parks, household rubbish collection and removal; community administration and remote swimming pool management.

The line item “Remote Aboriginal Communities” is for the ongoing delivery of baseline services to residents in the 190 remote and town-based communities currently serviced by Department of Communities to ensure foundational health and safety outcomes for residents of remote communities including housing services; town based accommodation; essential and municipal services delivery; and the maintenance and operation of existing swimming pools.

- (b) Remote Aboriginal Communities.

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B2. Hon Colin de Grussa MLC – Local Content Advisor Network

- (1) (a) Provide a report/update on how local content advisors are tracking in terms of the actual performance.
(b) Provide a headcount and FTE of LCANs for each of the RDCs.

Answer:

- (1) (a) I table the Local Content Adviser Network Report 2018-19. This report is also available on the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development's website. This report relays the performance and direction of the Local Content Adviser Network in 2018-2019 financial year. The 2019-2020 report is anticipated for release in January 2021.
(b) The headcount and FTE of LCANs for each of the RDCs is provided in the following table:

Regional Development Commission	FTE
Gascoyne Development Commission	1
Goldfields-Esperance Development Commission	1
Great Southern Development Commission	1
Kimberley Development Commission	1
Mid-West Development Commission	1
Peel Development Commission	1
Pilbara Development Commission	1
South West Development Commission	1
Wheatbelt Development Commission	1

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B3. Hon Colin Tincknell MLC – Rural Financial Counselling Service

- (1) What budget allocation is being provided to the Rural Financial Counselling Service WA?

Answer:

- (1) The allocation to Rural Financial Counselling Service WA is allocated in the budget on pg 241 against Rural Farm Assistance (Rural Business Development Unit). In 2019-20, \$173,250 was provided to Rural Financial Counselling Services WA. The amount in the budget papers for the forward estimates is incorrect as it included a payment made to the WA Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (WANDRRA) of \$1.52 million in 2019-20, which has been incorrectly carried forward into the outyears.

\$180,000 has been allocated to the Rural Financial Counselling Service WA in 2020-21 and across the forward estimates.



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B4. Hon Martin Aldridge MLC – Western Australian Regional Development Trust

(1) Provide the annual allocation of funds to the trust.

Answer:

- (1) The annual allocation of funds to the trust is \$225,000. Pursuant to section 9(2)(c) and section 27 of the Royalties for Regions Act 2009 (the Act), the Department provides the Trust with an operating budget to cover the expenditure incurred in the administration of the Trust, including remuneration and travel allowances for Trust members.

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B5 Hon Martin Aldridge MLC – Administered items

- (1) Provide a list of projects that are under consideration, under development or in planning processes.

Answer:

The Administered Items budget line is a provision made mainly for election commitments when further planning is required to deliver the proposals.

I am advised that it was the standard practice of the previous government to not disclose those projects under development until they had been considered and approved by government.

However, funding provisions for the following projects are included within the administered items budget line: Albany artificial surf reef; the development of serviced industrial land; the regional telecommunications project; and Transforming Bunbury's Waterfront (Stage 3).



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B6. Hon Martin Aldridge MLC – Royalties for Regions almanac.

- (1) Provide what the Premier said in the Legislative Assembly Budget Estimates hearing and what is the basis for him saying that.

Answer:

I can confirm that the Premier noted that the Royalties for Regions Almanac is an internal Departmental document that was not released publicly by the previous Government.

