



Hon Peter Collier MLC
Minister for Education; Aboriginal Affairs; Electoral Affairs
Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Our Ref: 34-33517

Ms Hannah Moore
Committee Clerk
Estimates and Financial Operations Committee
Legislative Council
Parliament House
Harvest Terrace
WEST PERTH WA 6005

Dear Ms Moore

I refer to the appearance of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs before the Estimates and Financial Operations Committee for the 2014-15 Annual Budget Estimates Hearing on Thursday, 12 June 2014.

Please find attached answers to the Additional Questions asked by Legislative Council Members.

Kind regards

Hon Peter Collier MLC
MINISTER FOR ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

- 3 JUL 2014

Att.

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ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Thursday 12 June 2014

Department of Aboriginal Affairs

Question No. 1: THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS ASKED-

Budget Paper 2 page 308 - Aboriginal Community Patrols will receive Component II funding of \$2.6 million over four years. Please explain what Component II funding entails and how this differs from the original funding?

Answer:

- The Departments of Finance, Treasury and the Premier and Cabinet are the lead agencies responsible for the distribution and implementation of Component II funding.
- Component II funding is the second tranche of State Government's Sustainable Funding and Contracting with the Not-For-Profit Sector, which represents the next step in State Government's effort to build a more mature relationship between the public and not-for-profit sectors through the *Delivering Community Services in Partnership Policy* endorsed by Cabinet on 11 April 2011 and effective from 1 July 2011.
- The Department of Treasury approved the allocation of Component II funding to the following two priority areas of Department of Aboriginal Affairs' submission:
 - sustainability of the not-for-profit service delivery in regional and remote areas; and
 - priority services with historical underfunding.

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ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Thursday 12 June 2014

Department of Aboriginal Affairs

Question No. 2: THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS ASKED-

We refer to Budget Paper 2, page 310 – The Government is allocating \$250,000 towards a Priority Heritage Protection Program which will provide grants to Aboriginal organisations for activities that protect and preserve Aboriginal heritage, and ask –

a) Is this a new program in 2013-14?

Answer:

Yes. The program will create opportunities for the not-for-profit sector to help preserve important Aboriginal sites in Western Australia. Benefits will include increased protection through hands on management of important sites, empowerment of Aboriginal groups to manage their own heritage, increased public understanding of Aboriginal heritage and the creation of economic development opportunities for Aboriginal organisations, particularly in regional areas.

b) If so, why is it not shown within spending changes?

Answer:

The program has been achieved through a reallocation of existing resources.

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ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Thursday 12 June 2014

Department of Aboriginal Affairs

Question No. 3: THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS ASKED-

We refer to Budget Paper 2, page 311 – Heritage Management, and ask –

a) What is the Department's monitoring program for Aboriginal heritage sites? How many sites are monitored each year?

Answer:

The Department of Aboriginal Affairs (DAA) has a key performance indicator and compliance indicator of 60 planned audits of section 18, section 16, Regulation 10 and Program of Works. However it should be noted that DAA also monitors sites through a number of other means including site preservation surveys, site recordings and mapping as well as in response to alleged breaches of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972*.

b) How many investigations into possible breaches of legislation in relation to Aboriginal Heritage has the Department conducted each year, over the last four years?

Answer:

The Department established a dedicated Compliance Unit in July 2011. The following number of investigations were undertaken over the last four years:

Year	Number of Investigations
2010/11	54
2011/12	59
2012/13	45
2013/14 (to 20 June 2014)	50

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c) *What was the outcome of these investigations?*

Answer:

Year	Outcomes of Investigations
2010/11	6 cases resolved (2 no offence, 1 no offender information, 3 limitation of time expired)
2011/12	98 cases resolved (31 no offence, 3 insufficient site information, 19 insufficient offender information, 17 advisory letters issued, 25 limitation of time expired, 1 breach no prosecution, 2 complaints withdrawn)
2012/13	70 cases resolved (37 no offence, 9 insufficient site information, 4 insufficient offender information, 12 advisory letters issued, 7 limitation of time expired, 1 complaint withdrawn)
2013/14 (to 20 June 2014)	62 cases resolved (35 no offence, 13 insufficient site information, 4 insufficient offender information, 9 advisory letters issued, 1 limitation of time expired)

It should be noted that when the Compliance Unit was created in 2011, there was a backlog of historic files. Therefore, the number of investigations into possible breaches of legislation in a given financial year differ from the number of outcomes of investigations in the same financial year.

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ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS COMMITTEE
QUESTIONS ON NOTICE SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

Thursday 12 June 2014

Department of Aboriginal Affairs

Question No. 4: Hon Robin Chapple MLC asked –

I refer to page 301, “Outcomes and Key Effectiveness Indicators: Regarding the targets”, and ask –

- a) Why is the Government happy to set such low targets for stakeholder satisfaction?*
- b) With the first and fourth listed targets, why has the Government kept to the ‘standard’ 65% in both 2013-14 and 2014-15 when the 2012-13 actuals were higher at 81% and 89% respectively?*
- c) With the second listed target, why has the Government failed to achieve even a 65% satisfaction relating to the management of the Aboriginal Lands Trust estate?*

Answer:

a) – c)

In February 2012, the Department of Treasury approved changes to the Department of Aboriginal Affairs (the Department) Outcome Based Management Framework. The new framework was developed to achieve greater alignment with the new strategic direction of the Department and seeks to improve the usefulness and relevancy of the key performance indicators to the Department’s outcomes and services.

2012-13 was the first year in which the new effectiveness indicators were tested through an independent survey of key stakeholders related to each of the Department’s four services. In discussions with OAG they advised that KPI’s could more fully be assessed with previous period data for comparison.

Understanding of past performance is a prerequisite for understanding how to set targets. Measurement of performance over a single period does not provide very useful information. Given that the baseline data gathered in 2012-13 was insufficient to determine a trend to set appropriate targets, the target from the previous financial years was used. The Department will be in a position to re-evaluate the individual targets for 2014-15 based on the trend data in the first two years.

Results achieved against key effectiveness indicators relating to the management of the Aboriginal Lands Trust estate have historically achieved results of 58.1 per cent in 2010-11 and 59 per cent in 2011-12. In comparison the 2012-13 satisfaction rating of 63 per cent indicates an improvement in overall stakeholder satisfaction against this outcome area.

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ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS COMMITTEE
QUESTIONS ON NOTICE SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

Thursday 12 June 2014

Department of Aboriginal Affairs

Question No. 5: Hon Robin Chapple asked –

In some ways further to the above question, but also but also a separately important matter, regarding the Online Land Approvals System/Aboriginal Heritage Electronic Lodgement Program (AHELP) on page 310 of Budget Paper 2, Volume 1, and ask –

a) While it can be understood how the AHELP system may assist those who are seeking to destroy Aboriginal heritage (i.e., achieving those approvals faster), in what ways, if any, will the program assist Aboriginal stakeholders seeking to protect that same heritage?

Answer:

The AHELP system will assist Aboriginal stakeholders to protect their heritage in the following ways:

1. The AHELP system has created electronic copies of all the historical information held by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs (DAA) on Aboriginal Sites. This archive consists of approximately 35,000 site files and 7,500 survey reports, dating back 40 years. These electronic copies can now be provided by email or by post.
2. The new electronic Heritage Information Submission forms have made it substantially easier for all people, including Aboriginal people, to identify Aboriginal sites of potential heritage value and report these places to DAA for assessment.
3. Efficiencies and business process improvements allowed through the AHELP system has also bolstered the capacity of the DAA Compliance Unit to investigate reported breaches of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* that may threaten registered Aboriginal heritage sites. Compliance staff estimate that at least 50 per cent of the time that was previously spent on administration has been released as a result of the AHELP system.
4. One of the developments in train for AHELP this year is an online mapping function for Aboriginal people who do not have access to geospatial software to send accurate map files identifying Aboriginal sites of significance.

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b) If there are some ways Aboriginal stakeholders can be expected to benefit, is there any evidence so far that the majority of Aboriginal stakeholders also perceive there to be those benefits?

Answer:

Despite the fact that Phase 1 of the AHELP system has only recently been released, feedback has already been received from many Aboriginal people regarding AHELP's benefits.

1. Prior to the introduction of the AHELP system, all interested parties, including Aboriginal people, had to make an appointment and view these documents in East Perth. This development has been welcomed by the Aboriginal people who have been provided with copies of significant documents including culturally sensitive material, maps, images and photographs. Major stakeholders including the Kimberley Land Council and the South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council have been very positive in their feedback following receipt of these documents which are of importance to the community.
2. At a recent workshop in Esperance held by DAA staff with a group of Traditional Owners, the new electronic Heritage Information Submission forms were welcomed as providing a more accessible, easily understood and more convenient method of reporting sites of potential heritage value. The imminent development of the AHELP online mapping tool was also strongly supported.
3. The members of the Aboriginal Cultural Material Committee were positive in their assessment of the AHELP system and the familiar look and feel it offers all users. The built-in help that the electronic form offers assists those who have no specialist knowledge or expertise in reporting potentially significant places to DAA for assessment.

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