Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Australian Trade Commission

Additional estimates 2001–2002, 20 February 2002

Question 1

Outcomes 1 & 2
Topic: Austrade Network including TradeStart/Export Access
Hansard pages 6 & 7

Senator Lundy asked:

(a) Please provide details of where Austrade offices are located throughout Australia

(b) Please provide details of the region that the Austrade ACT Regional Trade Commissioner services.

Answer:

(a) A table and a map showing the locations of Austrade offices including the TradeStart/Export Access/TradeSat* network is attached.

(b) Austrade's Regional Trade Commissioner for the ACT and Southern NSW is co–located with Business ACT in Canberra. Apart from the ACT, the position has responsibility in the Australian Capital Region, the Central West and the Riverina. Resources servicing this region include three TradeStart officers (located in Nowra, Wagga Wagga and Bathurst) and one Export Access officer (located in Canberra) who work with the Regional Trade Commissioner to deliver export services in the region.

* TradeSat is used to convey information on exporting opportunities to regional and rural Australia via a video satellite link.

Attachments:

- **Austrade and Ally offices in Australia (as at 1 September 2001)**
- **Austrade's regional network.**

[Separate documents in electronic form.]

Question 2

Outcome 1
Topic: ICT Specialist travel to Canberra
Hansard page 8

Senator Lundy asked:

How many times has the ICT specialist travelled to Canberra over the last 12 months?

Answer:

The ICT National Manager and members of her team have travelled to Canberra approximately once a month over the last 12 months to meet with allies and attend events associated with the ICT industry. The ICT industry in Canberra is also serviced by a Regional Trade Commissioner and Export Access officer who are in regular contact with the ICT industry in Canberra.

Question 3

Outcome 1
Topic: TradeStart funding
Hansard page 10

Senator Lundy asked:

With regard to funding for TradeStart offices located in Alice Springs, Kunnunurra and Carnarvon provided by the Department of Transport and Regional Services please provide a complete breakdown of which departments contribute what, in both financial and in–kind terms.

Answer:

Under Austrade's agreement with the Department of Transport and Regional Services, Austrade received funding of $96,509 for 2001 calendar year for the provision of TradeStart services in Kunnunurra, Alice Springs and Carnarvon. In-kind services provided by Austrade are primarily for training in program service delivery, provision of satellite communications equipment for receipt of TradeSat broadcasts and facilitation of overseas buyer visits to the respective TradeStart regions.

Austrade has no similar agreements with any other Federal government departments.

Question 4

Outcome 2
Topic: TradeStart—Announcement of expansion of the network
Hansard page 13

Senator Lundy asked:

Please provide me with a copy of the Minister's press release which provided details on the proposal to establish 10 new TradeStart offices.

Answer:

There was no Ministerial press release specifically on the proposal to establish new TradeStart offices. The Government's Trade Policy Statement "Australians Exporting to the World" stated as follows:

"A re–elected Coalition Government will expand the TradeStart and Export Access programs, committing $21.55 million over four years to the funding of the TradeStart and Export Access programs and the establishment of ten new offices".

Question 5

Outcome 1
Topic: Australian Industry Group Sponsorship
Hansard pages 14 & 19

Senator Lundy asked:

Please provide details of the $50,000 in sponsorship provided to the Australian Industry Group, a description of events held, where they were held and if any Members of Parliament were present at each event.

Answer:

The Australian Industry Group Export Boost Campaign was the result of the group's report, "Industries in the Regions 2001". This proposal fitted well with Austrade's Exporter Development initiative.

Accordingly, Austrade agreed to support this program with speakers and audience attraction, contributing $50,000. The agreement with AIG was that the funds were to be used to produce promotional material, to help stage the free workshops and some follow up activities. All events were AIG events not Austrade.

Free workshops to launch the campaign were held in Hobart, Bendigo, Albury, Mackay, Salisbury and Bunbury during 2001.

Federal and State politicians were invited to participate. Minister Vaile opened the workshops held in Albury and Mackay.

Question 6

Outcome 4
Topic: EMDG
Hansard page 16

Senator Lundy asked:

Please provide details of the reimbursements for all industry bodies that have approved body status under EMDG, what they did to qualify for that reimbursement and how is the money acquitted?

Answer:

Please see the attached listing of Approved Body grant recipients for 2000/01 financial year.

Payments made under the EMDG scheme Approved Bodies category (peak industry associations) is for partial reimbursement of eligible generic export market promotion undertaken on behalf of the industry represented by the organisation.

Applications may be lodged annually from 1 July to 30 November for reimbursement of eligible expenditure incurred in the preceding financial year. The scheme operates on a non-discretionary basis and applications are assessed by Austrade Grant auditors against the eligibility criteria specified in the EMDG Act 1997. The audit process requires that claimed expenditure can be verified.

Applications are processed on a first-come, first–served basis. Applications are generally paid within 8 weeks of receipt if lodged before November (processing will take longer if lodged in November).

All recipients including approved bodies, i.e. industry associations, can receive a maximum grant of up to $200,000 per year, subject to available funds.

Attachment: **EMDG approved body recipients in the 2000–01 financial year.**

[Separate document in electronic form.]

Question 7

Outcome 1
Topic: Inaugural Seafood Industry Awards
Hansard page 17

Senator Lundy asked:

Please provide details about the logistics of the Inaugural Seafood Industry Awards (ASIA).

Answer:

The Australian Seafood Industry Association held its National Conference in Brisbane from 27–29 November. The Awards dinner was held at The Sheraton Hotel & Towers in Brisbane.

Austrade provided sponsorship of $2,000 which was for the "Seafood Business of the Year Award".

Question 8

Outcomes 1, 2, 3, 4
Topic: Managing Director of Austrade
Hansard page 21

Senator Cook asked:

(a) Please provide a list of the responsibilities and/or duty statement for this position; and

(b) if in seeking guidance from the Remuneration Tribunal, were like positions elsewhere in the Public Service, State or Federal, identified as being of similar standing to this position?

Answer:

(a) Managing Director's responsibilities/duties:

- In consultation with the Minister, Board and Senior executive team, developing and implementing Austrade's overall strategy and agenda for continuous development. As a component of this, developing and presenting to the Board the Corporate and Operational Plans in accordance with the *Australian Trade Commission Act*, 1985
- Ensuring financial and governance integrity of Austrade and achieving the agreed programme objectives within the budget set out in the Operational Plan.
- Providing the commercial leadership for Austrade to play a fully effective role in helping Australians generate export business and investment.
- Developing, inspiring and leading an executive team that provides the expertise critical to Austrade's success.
- Ensure leadership continuity in key Executive positions through a thorough and integrated succession planning process based on high potential internal personnel development
- Ensuring that the organisation maintains a strong client focus and achieves targets to increase Australia's international business success, including by substantially increasing the number of Australian companies that are exporting, particularly small to medium sized enterprises.
- Overseeing the provision of support to exporters, including managing the Export Market Development Grants Scheme, and providing consular services in 20 offices around the world.
- Being a leader in championing the role of Austrade through the communication of its capabilities objectives and achievements.
- Servicing and using the Austrade Board well.
- Managing the relationship with the Minister for Trade and other key portfolio Ministers, parliamentarians and senior public servants.

(b) Remuneration Tribunal

Austrade did not compare like positions elsewhere in the State or Federal Public Service to that of the Managing Director of Austrade. The package was based on the current salary previously determined by the Remuneration Tribunal for the position of Managing Director set at $202,000 with the addition of employee sponsored superannuation costs, reasonable non–cash benefits (motor vehicle and spouse accompanied travel) and fringe benefit costs. This took the total package to circa $300,000.

The Remuneration Tribunal, in response to Minister Vaile's request for its views on this proposed package, indicated that "under the PEO Structure an appropriate commencing total remuneration amount would be in the order of $290,000. In addition to this amount the Managing Director would be eligible to access performance pay".

The Minister for Employment & Workplace Relations will formally seek the Tribunal's views of the appropriateness of the Total Remuneration Package before regulating the Office into the appropriate band in the PEO structure.

Question 9

Outcomes 1 & 2
Topic: Export Impact p. 14 of Austrade's Annual Report
Hansard page 26

Senators Ludwig & Lundy asked:

Please provide a copy of the letter from KPMG that states:

"Because 2000-01 was the first year in which Austrade had verified export impact data directly with clients, KPMG were engaged to perform agreed–upon sample review procedures to assist management in verifying the Export/Investment Impact data to be reported for 2000–01. The review indicated that the data examined by KPMG, which has been utilised to report the financial export/investment impacts for 2000–01 was not materially misstated".

Answer:

The advice from KPMG was received via e-mail following a verbal discussion. The wording contained in that e–mail follows:

"KPMG were engaged by Austrade to perform agreed upon sample review procedures to assist management in verifying the Export/Investment Impact data to be reported for 2000–2001. The review did not indicate that the data examined by KPMG, which has been utilised to report the financial export/investment impacts for 2000/2001, are materially misstated."

Question 10

Outcomes 1, 2 & 4
Topic: Contractors used by Austrade
Hansard page 27

Senator Lundy asked:

Please provide me with details, across Austrade, of the functions that have been outsourced (the value of the contract and the duration).

Answer:

A list of the functions that have been outsourced by Austrade is attached.

Attachment: **Austrade functions that have been outsourced.**

[Separate document in electronic form.]