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Subject: ATSIA Committee Hearing 6 February 2006: Additional Information

Thank you for the copy of the proof transcript of evidence I gave at the ATSIA committee hearing on 6 February 2006.

I have no editorial corrections, but would like to provide information in response to two questions I took on notice at the hearing. The pertinent questions (page 50 of the transcript) and my (italicised) responses are set out below:

CHAIR – Is it exclusively Indigenous or does it have a mix?

Mr Noonan – I am not aware of any exception to the rule of Indigenous businesses, but perhaps I could take that on notice.

Response – The guidelines of the Business Ready Program for Indigenous Tourism state that Indigenous tourism businesses will only be eligible for mentoring under the program if they are 'majority Indigenous owned and operated'.

CHAIR – This question, therefore, will have to be on notice. The focus of our Indigenous coordination centres since the demise of ATSIC is what it is, but particularly in remote areas there is a mapping of existing and potential jobs in the area and developing a five- to 10-year local jobs for local people plan. What information has been collected in this project in terms of tourism employment opportunities and how does it connect to your various agencies and to your own department? Perhaps you can take that on notice.

Mr Noonan – Yes.

Response – There are Indigenous Coordination Centres (ICC) located in each of the six regions mentors are working in. Business mentors have been encouraged to work closely with their local ICCs in providing businesses with the optimal training and development opportunities.

The Department has not collected any information in terms of tourism employment opportunities arising from the Business Ready Program for Indigenous Tourism. If the Program succeeds in its primary objective - to assist the establishment of sustainable indigenous tourism businesses - it should assist indigenous employment. But the extent of this cannot be gauged at this early stage.

Yours sincerely

Philip Noonan

28/02/2006