

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates 26 May-6 June 2014

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Outcome/Program: 1.1 Prime Minister and Cabinet

Topic: Budget

Senator: Senator the Hon Jan McLucas

Question reference number: 293

Type of Question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 11 July 2014

Number of pages: 2

Question:

1. Why is \$3.5 million being cut from the TSRA over the next four years?
2. According to Budget Paper No.2, funding provided to the TSRA will be reduced to achieve efficiencies in its administration of grants.
 - a. Noting that the TSRA Board has now met and approved the administration of the cut, could the Department provide a full account of where this funding will be cut from? Could the department account for these savings and how they will be applied within the TSRA on a year-by-year basis.
 - b. Will staffing be reduced? If so, provide details on the number and roles of affected staff.
 - c. List all affected programmes.
 - d. List all affected grants.
3. The reduction of red tape and the elimination of waste and duplicity were identified as the reason for the 4.5 per cent reduction in funding for Indigenous programs, similarly applied to the TSRA as stated in Budget Paper No.2.
 - a. What specific red tape or duplicitous processes were identified within the TSRA before the decision was made to reduce funding by \$3.5 million over four years?
 - b. Was any consultation had with the TSRA concerning the \$3.5 million cut or unnecessary red tape before the decision was made? Provide the location, dates and
 - c. Was an evaluation of the TSRA undertaken after 7 September 2013 and prior to the Budget?

Answer:

1. The Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) reduction of \$3.5 million over four years from 2014-15 is broadly in line with the savings to be achieved as part of the Indigenous Programme Consolidation, which has seen grant funding reduced as

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates 26 May-6 June 2014

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

part of government efforts to drive greater efficiency. These savings are based on a 4.5 per cent reduction to the TSRA's Grants Programme.

2. (a) The reduction in TSRA funding for 2014-15 is \$1.2 million, and will then reduce over the forward estimates in line with budgeted grant expenditure (\$0.9 million in 2015-16, \$0.8 million in 2016-17 and \$0.6 million in 2017-18).
 - (b) Decisions on how funds are expended are a matter for TSRA.
 - (c) Decisions on how funds are expended are a matter for TSRA.
 - (d) Decisions on how funds are expended are a matter for TSRA.
3. (a) Identifying where to reduce red tape and eliminate duplication is the responsibility of programme owners. TSRA is best placed to make this decision for its grants programmes.
 - (b) TSRA was advised of funding changes prior to the Budget being announced.
 - (c) No.