

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Supplementary Budget Estimates 2013-2014

Outcome 2 - Schools and Youth

Department of Education Question No. ED0220_14

Senator McKenzie asked on 20 November 2013, Hansard page 96

Question

Trade Training Centre assets

CHAIR: If the partnership breaks down, what happens to the assets? Mr Hehir: The assets tend to be located in a particular school, so it is unlikely that the asset would be moved in most circumstances unless it is able to be moved. I would need to check the actual funding rules. Normally it is a requirement that the asset continues to be used for the purposes that it was funded for. CHAIR: Which means that all those that signed up to use the asset should be able to still continue to use the asset? Mr Hehir: That would be the intent. I would need to check and see whether there are circumstances where that has not been possible. CHAIR: What measures are in place to ensure that that can occur? And have you checked back with the trade-training centre partnerships to ensure that that is exactly what the intent is and what is happening? Mr Hehir: I would need to check and see whether we have had a check back with the trade-training centre themselves. I will take that on notice. CHAIR: Thank you.

Answer

Program funding agreements include provisions that prevent participating schools, whether in a stand-alone or cluster project, from selling, disposing of or ceasing to use Trade Training Centre assets during the designated use period without the prior consent of the Department of Education.

Should a relationship in a cluster project break down and a school with Program-funded assets onsite wish to withdraw from the project, the department would seek to relocate the assets, where possible, to another Trade Training Centre site within the project. If the assets could not be relocated, the department would seek to sell the assets so that the funds could be returned to the Australian Government.

The department is aware of only one school that has withdrawn from the Program due to a partnership breakdown. The relevant project involved two Remote Service Delivery schools in the Northern Territory who were unable to resolve their cultural differences and effectively work together. The school that withdrew from the project subsequently applied for funding in a later funding round and was successful in gaining funding to establish its own Trade Training Centre.