

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT

Group 2

Program 1.3

Question No. 9

Senator Smith asked the following question at the hearing on 23 May 2012:

Senator SMITH: It is that consultation point that I am leading to. I am keen to understand: has the Western Australia Pastoralists and Graziers Association been part of that consultation process [for the Native Title Respondent Funding Scheme]?

Mr Duggan: That is certainly my understanding. We have certainly consulted with the NFF. My understanding is that we would have consulted with the Western Australian as well. I can confirm for you, by taking on notice, exactly when that would have occurred, but we have basically sent a discussion paper very widely to all stakeholders—and, as you appreciate, that federation is a considerable stakeholder in this field.

Senator SMITH: Exactly. I would be interested in understanding what has been the extent of consultation with the Pastoral and Graziers Association, specifically in Western Australia.

...

Senator SMITH: Excellent. So, just to summarise then, consultation has been taking place. There is an understanding that the Western Australian Pastoralists and Graziers Association would have been part of that?

Mr Duggan: That is right, but I will confirm that for you.

Senator SMITH: Thank you.

The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:

Letters dated 26 August 2011 were sent to stakeholders, including the Pastoralists and Graziers Association of WA (PGA), AgForce Queensland, and South Australian Farmers' Federation (SAFF), about the revision of Native Title Respondent Funding Scheme (NTRFS) and NTRFS consultation. Those three peak bodies are members of the National Farmers' Federation (NFF). Stakeholders were encouraged to review the Terms of Reference for the review and the Frequently Asked Questions on our website, and to contribute submissions to the review.

The NTRFS review was undertaken by Mr AC Neal SC. During the consultation, Mr Neal and an officer of the Department met with various stakeholders. Mr Neal travelled to Perth to meet with Ms Sandy Hayter and Ms Jenni Stawell from the PGA, and Mr Alan Cleland, Chairman, PGA Native Title Working Group. Mr John Steenhof, Partner, Cornerstone Legal, and Mr Chris Humphry, Partner, Hunt and Humphry Project Lawyers, also attended the meeting on 7 September 2011.

The consultation included an invitation for submissions from stakeholders on the operations of the current scheme. Twenty-one submissions were received, and of those 11 submissions were provided with authority to publish. Those submissions are available on the Department's website.

PGA provided an independent submission. PGA, Cornerstone Legal and Hunt and Humphry provided a joint submission.

Subsequently, Mr Neal's review report was published on the Department's website in April 2012. All stakeholders were notified when the Report was published.