

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Resources, Energy and Tourism Portfolio

Budget Estimates

29 May 2012

Question: **BR18**

Topic: **Government Funding Towards the Great Barrier Reef Foundation**

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Senator Bushby asked:

Mr Clarke: It is headed 'Fact Sheet 9 May'.

Senator BUSHBY: 'Fact sheet—government support for tourism'?

Mr Clarke: Yes.

Senator BUSHBY: That is probably it.

Mr Clarke: I am happy to read it into the record, if that is what you are after.

Senator BUSHBY: If you could read the particular outcomes that it is trumpeting.

Mr Clarke: Certainly. It talks about the totality of funding for tourism in Australia over the forward estimates being \$715 million over the next four years, with \$591 million to TA. It talks about the \$61 million for the Asia Marketing Fund within the forward estimates. It outlines funding related to major tourism attractions: the Melbourne Royal Exhibition Building and the Great Barrier Reef Foundation. And there is a reference to the standard tourist program charge on the Great Barrier Reef. It outlines support for the G20 Leaders' Summit, which in the context of business tourism would be important and will be a boost in Australia. It outlines a number of measures relating to small business where that relates to tourism. It outlines measures relating to employment skills and training, skilled migration and infrastructure.

Senator BUSHBY: A couple of those I will just pick up then. The governments funding towards the Great Barrier Reef Foundation does that, in effect, offset the reduction in the reef visitor levy which the government applied to tourism businesses as carbon tax compensation?

Mr Clarke: Because we do not administer those programs, I do not think we can give you a definitive answer. I am happy to take it on notice in that spirit of sourcing the information for you.

Answer:

The Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water Population and Communities advises that funding for the Great Barrier Reef Foundation is in no way associated with the Great Barrier Reef tourism environmental management charge reduction decision.