



Dr Brendan Nelson
Director

7 April 2017

Mr David Sullivan
Secretary
Senate Foreign Affairs Defence and Trade Committee
Department of the Senate
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr Sullivan

I am writing to request a clarification of evidence to the Proof Committee Hansard for the Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Legislation Committee of 1 March 2017.

On page 103 (extract attached) of the Proof Committee Hansard, Senator Fawcett asked the Memorial to provide detail regarding an estimated 2015-16 grant for \$2.727 million listed in the Portfolio Budget Statement under Section 3.12, Grants, Table 45, Approved Grants.

At the time, the Memorial's Chief Financial Officer, Ms Leanne Patterson, was not able to locate the information in the 2016-17 Veterans' Affairs Portfolio Budget Statements, but confirmed that it was for the Spirit of Anzac Centenary Experience.

A subsequent review of portfolio budget statements indicates that the Senator was referring to the 2016-17 Defence Portfolio Budget Statements and not the 2016-17 Veterans' Affairs Portfolio Budget Statements.

For your consideration, the Memorial is seeking the addition of the following statement as a footnote for clarification in the Proof Committee Hansard record:

The original question by Senator Fawcett referred to the Defence Portfolio Budget Statement. The answer provided by Ms Leanne Patterson was correct in terms of funding allocation but was not accurate in terms of the funding source.

In addition to the \$10m from Government for the First World War Centenary Project, the Department of Defence also contributed an additional \$8.1m grant to the Memorial. The grant is payable over three years in equal instalments of \$2.7m. The figure is not separately disclosed in the Veterans' Affairs Portfolio Budget Statements as it is incorporated into general revenue, but appears as a grant payment in the Defence Portfolio Budget Statements.

Yours sincerely

Brendan Nelson

Here is their spirit, in the heart of the land they loved; and here we guard the record which they themselves made. C.E.W. Bean

GPO Box 345
Canberra ACT 2601
tel: (02) 6243 4262
web: www.awm.gov.au



Attachment A

Senator FAWCETT: You have stolen my thunder around Beersheba, but that is good to hear. I am glad there will also be something here, because obviously there are many people who will not be able to make it over to Israel for that particular commemoration. I will start off by saying, since the last estimates when we spoke, I have heard many comments by both domestic and international visitors to Canberra who have said that the War Memorial is one of their highlights. Those who could not attend the last post ceremony have said that they heard about it and one of their regrets of visiting Canberra was not actually attending the ceremony.

I will just commend you and your staff for not only the initiatives you have put in place but clearly the ongoing work to maintain the high standard that really engages people, even those who do not have a history as an Australian. The international visitors were equally positive about it. It is a real credit to you and your staff what you are doing for Australia. Thank you. To go to the issue of funding, just going back to the portfolio budget statement. Table 45 talks about grants. I noted that there was an estimated 2015-16 grant for \$2.727 million, but the total grant approved was \$8.181 million. I am just wondering if you could give us some detail as to what that was for and how that has been utilised?

Dr Nelson: I will ask my chief financial officer to answer the question.

Ms Patterson: Unfortunately, I do not have the PBS right in front of me, but from the memory I believe that the \$2.7 grant you are referring to is transfer for the Spirit of Anzac Centenary Experience. Alternatively, it could be for the official history of Iraq and Afghanistan.

Senator FAWCETT: Feel free to take it on notice.

Ms Patterson: Thank you, I will.

Senator FAWCETT: It is just that there is no explanatory note in the table. I was just interested as to what that amount was for. The estimate for 2016-17 is that it is \$2.7 again, so it looks as though that is a consistent grant; but there was obviously a spike in that last period. It is page 102.

Ms Patterson: I am sorry, I do not see that figure on the document.

Senator FAWCETT: Section 3.12, grants. Table 45, approved grants. It is about halfway down the table.

Ms Patterson: Is this the 2016-17 portfolio budget statements?

Senator FAWCETT: Let me just check that I am not looking at the additional ones.

CHAIR: The problem with modern electronics, as you and I found in the national centre in Albany on the day it opened. Neither one of us could make the technology work, as I remember.

Dr Nelson: I would be pretty confident that it is one of two things. It is either the official histories—

Ms Patterson: I found it.

Senator FAWCETT: You found it?

Ms Patterson: Yes, this confirms it is for the Spirit of Anzac Centenary Experience. My apologies for the confusion.

Senator FAWCETT: That is all right. I had not even yet scrolled back to the top of the document. So that was just general funding to enable the tour that has gone around Australia, a specific purpose grant for that?

Ms Patterson: Yes, the government provided an original \$10 million in funding and, over the years, as the project progressed, we reallocated funding in the year that the money would be spent. That came through in the portfolio budget statements.

Comment [LP1]: Note: The Senator was referring to the 2016-17 Defence Portfolio Budget Statements, not the 2016-17 Veterans Affairs Portfolio Budget Statements

Comment [LP2]: Clarification required

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tel: (02) 6243 4211
fax: (02) 6243 4325
web: www.awm.gov.au