

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
FAMILIES, HOUSING, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND
INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO
2011-12 Additional Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: 7

Question No: 316

Topic: Aboriginals Benefit Account

Hansard Page: 17/02/2012 - CA33-34

Senator Siewert asked:

From the beginning of this financial year to date, could you provide details of payments associated with the Northern Territory (with the exception of township leasing) which are coming out of the ABA? Could you provide the figure and nature of the grants, and any other payments that have come out of the ABA?

Answer:

From the beginning of the financial year to 31 January 2012, payments totalling \$97.263 million have been made out of the Aboriginals Benefit Account (ABA) (this excludes costs associated with township leasing). The vast majority of monies paid out of the ABA have been for payments to the Northern Territory land councils for administrative purposes, payments to the land councils for distribution to royalty associations, and grant payments made for the benefit of Aboriginal people living in the Northern Territory.

The following table details the monies that have been debited from the ABA to the 31 January 2012 under the various subsections of Section 64 the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* (the ALRA).

ABA Payment Category	Description	1/7/2011 – 31/1/2012 \$ '000
Payments to land councils – ALRA s.64(1), in accordance with s.34(1)	Payments to the Northern Territory land councils as determined by the Minister to meet their administrative expenditure. The ALRA requires the administrative expenditure of the land councils to be in accordance with proposed estimates of expenditure approved by the Minister.	27,496
Payments to royalty associations – ALRA s.64(3)	Payments to the land councils for distribution to incorporated Aboriginal associations, communities or groups (royalty associations) in order to benefit those Aboriginal people who are affected by mining operations. These payments are directly linked to the amount of royalty equivalent monies received in respect of mining in the areas concerned. Royalty associations receive 30 per cent of the royalty equivalents paid into the ABA.	31,527
Beneficial payments – ALRA s.64(4)	Payments directed by the Minister for the benefit of Aboriginal people living in the Northern Territory.	37,842
Administration payments – ALRA s.64(6)	Payments to meet the expenses of administering the ABA.	398
Total Expenditure		97,263