

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee
Answers to questions on notice
Environment portfolio

Question No: 37
Hearing: Budget Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 1
Programme: Wildlife Heritage and Marine Division (WHM)
Topic: NATIONAL WORLD HERITAGE LISTINGS - TASMANIAN WILDERNESS WORLD HERITAGE AREA
Hansard Page: 22
Question Date: 27 May 2014
Question Type: Spoken

Senator Urquhart asked:

Senator URQUHART: Thank you. I just want to talk about the national World Heritage listings. On the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area delisting request, can you inform the committee what has been spent on this?

Dr Dripps: Senator, we would have to take that question on notice because it has been departmental officers working on the documents that were submitted on 1 February and so we would have to undertake a calculation of the amount of time that those officers have spent on that.

Senator URQUHART: Okay—if you could take that on notice, that would be great. Can you provide details on the staffing resources, the travel et cetera that has been invested in pursuing this request to the World Heritage Committee?

Dr Dripps: Thank you, we will take that question on notice. I would just draw your attention to the fact that, with our World Heritage engagement, we undertake work on a range of different fronts and we do not take additional trips for specific projects. We have the DFAT ambassador to UNESCO, who is located in Paris and who does a lot of work—as part of his other work he is also the ambassador to Chad in the Central African Republic. So part of his role is in being the ambassador to UNESCO. We do attend the General Assembly of States Parties and other meetings such as the meeting that was held in March on the voting procedures of the World Heritage Committee. As part of those meetings we do deliver on our other policy objectives at the same time.

Senator URQUHART: Okay. But, if you can break that down on notice, that would be great.

Senator RUSTON: Senator Urquhart, can I just a supplementary question to that?

Senator URQUHART: I have a couple more on this, so—

Senator RUSTON: Only in as much as I was just wondering if you could provide similar sorts of information in relation to the 2013 listing in terms of the expenses.

Dr Dripps: Yes, of course.

Answer:

It is not feasible to calculate how many staff hours were spent on developing and writing the 2013 and 2014 requests for minor boundary modification as the Department does not maintain records of such information.

Total expenditure for travel, publications and consultants related to the preparation of the requests for a minor boundary modification were:

2013 - \$96,172

2014 - \$33,715

The breakdown of these costs for the 2013 minor boundary modification request is:

Travel and accommodation - \$45,600

Note: The travel and accommodation costs of the Australian delegation attending the 2013 World Heritage Committee meeting were \$22,902. This includes travel and accommodation costs of a Tasmanian Aboriginal representative and a consultant to support the delegation with regard to the Tasmanian minor boundary modification request. The delegation achieved a range of outcomes in addition to the Tasmanian minor boundary modification request. Travel and accommodation costs related to meetings with Tasmanian officials to negotiate the boundary were \$22,695.

Publications - \$4,185

Consultants - \$46,387

The breakdown of these costs for the 2014 minor boundary modification request is:

Travel and accommodation - \$32,650

Note: The estimated travel and accommodation costs of the Australian delegation attending the 2014 World Heritage Committee meeting were \$31,000. Final costs will not be available until this travel is acquitted. The delegation achieved a range of outcomes in addition to the Tasmanian minor boundary modification request. Travel costs related to a meeting with the Minister were \$1,650.

Publications - \$1,065