

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates 24-28 February 2014

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

**Department/Agency:** Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

**Outcome/Program:** 1.1 Prime Minister and Cabinet

**Topic:** Wadeye Hostel

**Senator:** Senator Bridget McKenzie

**Question reference number:** 137

**Type of Question:** Written

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** 11 April 2014

**Number of pages:** 2

**Question:**

1. The former government pledged \$28 million to open three aboriginal boarding schools in the Northern Territory in 2008. How many of these have actually been built?
2. When did Wadeye become operational?
3. Did the facility cost \$14.5million?
4. Was it over budget and if so why?
5. Was it because the cost of staff housing had not been considered?
6. Where will the money for the two other facilities come from given Wadeye has used half the money pledged for the three facilities?
7. Is it possible to build two other 40 bed hostels?
8. How many residents at the facility are drawn from communities outside Wadeye?
9. Who manages the hostel?
10. How many people does it employ and how many of these are Indigenous?

**Answer:**

1. One, in Wadeye.
2. The Wadeye boarding facility became fully operational at the commencement of the 2013 school year.
3. The construction cost of the facility was \$14.3 million.
4. Yes. The original budget did not factor into account the need for staff housing, required to attract quality personnel to work in a remote area. Additionally, the cost of building in a very remote locality in the Northern Territory where construction materials had to be barged into Wadeye, and severe wet seasons, impacted on the costs of the construction.

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5. See answer 4 above.
6. The future of this initiative is still being considered.
7. See answer 6 above.
8. 10 resident students come from outside Wadeye.
9. Aboriginal Hostels Limited.
10. Aboriginal Hostels Limited has advised there are currently 15 people employed at the hostel, of whom 10 are Indigenous.