

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates 26 May-6 June 2014

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Outcome/Program: 1.1 Prime Minister and Cabinet

Topic: Indigenous Budget information online

Senator: Senator the Hon Jan McLucas

Question reference number: 262

Type of Question: Written

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

Number of pages: 7

Question:

1. Can the department confirm that the information in the Indigenous Affairs Budget section on the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet's website and the Minister's Budget media release are the only public information that has been released since the Budget about the proposed changes for Indigenous programmes?
2. Why is there no mention of 'Closing the Gap' in either the Minister's Budget media release or on the Budget information page on the department's website? Was this a deliberate omission? Is the Government still committed to Closing the Gap as outlined by the COAG reform agreement?

Answer:

1. In addition to the information provided on the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet's website and the Minister's Budget media release, stakeholders were sent a letter enclosing a fact sheet on the Indigenous Advancement Strategy during the week ending 16 May 2014. Stakeholders were invited to contact the Department if they had any questions about the issue (letter and fact sheet attached).
2. Closing the Gap is a commitment by all Australian governments to improve the lives of Indigenous Australians. The Prime Minister reports annually to the Parliament on progress in Closing the Gap.

The Government remains committed to the six existing Closing the Gap targets. A new Closing the Gap target on Indigenous school attendance was also agreed by the Council of Australian Governments on 2 May 2014.



MINISTER FOR INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

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Dear <D>

I am writing about how the 2014-15 Budget will deliver better results from Indigenous programmes and services and how the Government will work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The Government's priorities are getting children to school, adults into work and making communities safer. Addressing these priorities will, over time, go a long way to closing the gap in Indigenous disadvantage.

From 1 July 2014, we will begin replacing more than 150 individual programmes and activities with five simple, streamlined programmes under an Indigenous Advancement Strategy.

The five new streamlined programmes are:

- Jobs, land and economy
- Children and schooling
- Safety and wellbeing
- Culture and capability
- Remote Australia strategies.

We will transform the way services are delivered by establishing a new, less bureaucratic Remote Community Advancement Network that will work with communities to deliver results in the priority areas.

We are making these changes because, in too many areas, we are continuing to fail to deliver – particularly in life expectancy, employment and education. Most Closing the Gap targets are not on track to be met.

There has also been far too much waste for far too long in Indigenous Affairs. More of the resources need to 'hit the ground.'

It is reasonable that Indigenous programmes, like other areas of spending, contribute to reducing government debt. However, by getting rid of unnecessary red tape and duplication, Indigenous programmes can make this contribution without reducing our impact on the ground. In fact, we can do much better by focusing on what works in priority areas.

We will honour all current funding agreements and most organisations whose funding is due to expire by June 2014 will receive an extension of six to twelve months to allow for a smooth transition.

More detailed information on the new programme arrangements can be found at: www.dpmc.gov.au.

If you have any questions please email: ias@pmc.gov.au or phone: 1800 088 323.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Nigel Scullion', with a stylized flourish at the end.

NIGEL SCULLION

14 May 2014



2014-15 Budget at a Glance

Indigenous Advancement Strategy

The Australian Government is replacing more than 150 individual programmes and activities with five simple, needs-based programmes under an Indigenous Advancement Strategy. These streamlined programmes will drive the Government's focus on the key priorities of getting children to school, adults into work, and making communities safer.

Indigenous Advancement – Jobs, Land and Economy Programme

\$2.5 billion over four years to get adults into work, foster Indigenous business and assist Indigenous people to generate economic and social benefits from effective use of their land.

Indigenous Advancement – Children and Schooling Programme

\$916.9 million over four years to get children to school, improve education outcomes and support families to give children a good start in life including:

- \$13.4 million over four years to provide ongoing funding for an additional 3,000 student places for the Clontarf Foundation's operations under the Sporting Chance Programme.

Indigenous Advancement – Safety and Wellbeing Programme

\$993.5 million over four years to ensure that Indigenous people are healthy and enjoy the emotional and social wellbeing experienced by other Australians including:

- \$53.0 million over four years to deliver police infrastructure to support a permanent police presence in some larger remote Indigenous communities.
- \$2.5 million over four years to engage Community Engagement Police Officers to assist Northern Territory Police to facilitate operational and cultural change.
- Providing the Australian Federal Police with \$3.8 million over four years to extend Commonwealth support for the Northern Territory Child Abuse Taskforce.

Indigenous Advancement – Culture and Capability Programme

\$140.3 million over four years to support Indigenous Australians to maintain their culture, participate in the economic and social life of the nation and ensure that organisations are capable of delivering quality services to their clients.

Indigenous Advancement – Remote Australia Strategies Programme

\$258.3 million over four years for strategic investment in local, flexible solutions based on community priorities and remote housing including:

- \$10.6 million over four years for the repair and maintenance of around 250 existing solar energy systems in more than 200 remote Indigenous communities in Qld, WA and the NT.



Australian Government

Department of the
Prime Minister and Cabinet

BUDGET

2014-15

Programme	2014-15 \$m	2015-16 \$m	2016-17 \$m	2017-18 \$m	4-year total \$m*
Indigenous Advancement – Jobs, Land and Economy	599.9	654.4	645.6	617.0	2516.9
Indigenous Advancement – Children and Schooling	226.9	225.7	231.7	232.6	916.9
Indigenous Advancement – Safety and Wellbeing	234.6	246.1	250.8	261.9	993.5
Indigenous Advancement – Culture and Capability	35.4	35.7	36.3	32.9	140.3
Indigenous Advancement – Remote Australia Strategies	64.9	64.3	63.6	65.5	258.3
Total Indigenous Advancement Strategy	1161.7	1226.1	1228.0	1209.9	4825.8
Special Appropriations	178.8	204.0	194.6	193.1	770.4
Total with Special Appropriations	1340.5	1430.1	1422.6	1403.1	5596.2

*The four-year total in this table excludes funding for PM&C Indigenous portfolio bodies and funding for national partnership agreements (NPAs) and special purpose payments transferred to PM&C (funding for all NPAs and SPPs is appropriated to the Treasury). Including these items brings the four-year total to approximately \$8.5 billion.



Indigenous Advancement Strategy

What is the Strategy?

The Government is committed to working more closely with Indigenous Australians on the priority areas of getting children to school, adults to work and making communities safer.

A new Indigenous Advancement Strategy to begin on 1 July 2014 will replace more than 150 individual programmes and activities with five simple, streamlined programmes all focused on achieving results in the priority areas:

- Jobs, Land and Economy
- Children and Schooling
- Safety and Wellbeing
- Culture and Capability
- Remote Australia Strategies

The new arrangements will reduce red tape and duplication to make sure that resources hit the ground.

The Strategy and its programmes will be managed by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C). Communities will have opportunities to contribute to the design and delivery of local solutions to local issues. Programmes will be implemented through the Remote Community Advancement Network in PM&C which will work with communities to produce long-term transformational change.

Next Steps?

The Strategy will begin on 1 July 2014 with a transition period to allow continuity of frontline services and time for communities and service providers to adjust to the new arrangements. The Government will honour all current funding agreements and many organisations who have received long term funding, and whose funding is due to expire in the near term, will receive an extension of six to 12 months to allow for a smooth transition. Further advice on funding processes for 2014-15 will be provided to interested communities and service providers shortly.

Further Information?

Further information on the Indigenous Advancement Strategy and programmes is available at www.dpmc.gov.au or by calling your funding agreement contract manager.

Jobs, Land and Economy Programme

This programme aims to get adults into work, foster Indigenous business and assist Indigenous people to generate economic and social benefits from effective use of their land, particularly in remote areas. The programme will fund a range of activities including those that support:

- Employment and training (including vocational education and training)
- Participation and work readiness
- Land rights including under native title processes and other legislation
- Land and sea management

Children and Schooling Programme

This programme focuses on getting children to school, improving education outcomes and improving access to further education as well as supporting families to give children a good start in life. The programme will fund a range of activities including those that support:

- Early childhood and parenting
- Schooling and attendance
- Improving access to further education
- Child, youth, families and community
- Scholarships and educational support and assistance

Safety and Wellbeing Programme

This programme is about ensuring the ordinary law of the land applies in Indigenous communities, and that Indigenous people enjoy similar levels of physical, emotional and social wellbeing enjoyed by other Australians. The programme will fund a range of activities including those that support:

- Health, social and emotional wellbeing
- Drug, alcohol and substance misuse prevention
- Community safety and violence prevention
- Legal services and access to justice, including interpreter services
- Diversionary programmes

Remote Australia Strategies Programme

This programme will support flexible solutions based on community and government priorities and support for remote housing strategies. The programme will fund a range of activities including those that support:

- Regional and place-based initiatives and remote service delivery
- Communications
- Housing, infrastructure and services

Culture and Capability Programme

This programme will support Indigenous Australians to maintain their culture, participate equally in the economic and social life of the nation and ensure that Indigenous organisations are capable of delivering quality services to their clients. The programme will fund a range of activities including those that support:

- Constitutional recognition
- Indigenous heritage protection
- Broadcasting and communications
- Leadership, organisational strengthening and engagement initiatives
- Community and organisational capacity building
- Support for Indigenous cultural matters.