

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Supplementary Budget Estimates 19-23 October 2015

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
Outcome/Program: Outcome 2: Indigenous
Topic: IAS – grants round

Senator: Senator the Hon Penny Wong

Question reference number: 21

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Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 4 December 2015

Number of pages: 2

Question:

Senator WONG: The Secretary's preface to the annual report says that he inherited from his predecessor:

a department that had successfully bedded down the incorporation of Indigenous affairs responsibilities ...

Can you tell me what the criteria applied to successful bedding down the incorporation of Indigenous affairs responsibilities were?

Ms Kelly: I can certainly make an attempt at that, and I am sure that Mr Tongue and Mr Eccles will add to it

on Friday. I imagine that relates to the Indigenous Advancement Strategy grants round, which was well underway

when Mr Thawley became secretary and was completed early this year, and the restructuring of the Indigenous

Affairs Group, including the establishment of the regional network.

Senator WONG: I would be keen—maybe on notice, perhaps for Friday when this committee is in—to understand what criteria that successful bedding down was assessed against.

Ms Kelly: I can certainly take that on notice.

Answer:

The Secretary's preface in the Annual Report describes several achievements as evidence of successful incorporation of Indigenous affairs responsibilities including:

- An open grant round was conducted under the \$4.9 billion Indigenous Advancement Strategy, resulting in funding to deliver over 1,350 projects that meet the Government's commitment to no cuts to frontline services.
- A new regional network to support services on the ground.
- The Remote School Attendance Strategy is delivering promising results.
- Reforms have been introduced to lift Indigenous employment and participation through:

- Substantial overhaul of remote employment services
- New investment in remote businesses
- A Commonwealth procurement target which has awarded nearly \$34 million worth of contracts in just the first four months of the policy. This is five times the previous amount procured by Government from Indigenous Businesses.
- A Commonwealth Indigenous employment target of 3 per cent.

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) also:

- Successfully transferred 1803 staff from nine agencies through Section 72 of the Public Service Act.
 - This included both programme and corporate support staff;
- Successfully transferred over 230 individual properties across more than 110 national locations, considerably increasing the PM&C accommodation portfolio.
 - Over 2000 staff movements occurred nationally to consolidate staff into PM&C premises, noting that some staff had multiple moves.
- Made changes to IT structures to facilitate the transfer of staff onto a protected network, recognising the various systems used by different agencies, and now supports a national Unclassified network, as well as adding two additional Canberra locations to its existing protected network.
- Completed transfer of departmental and administered appropriations.