

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Resources, Energy and Tourism Portfolio

Additional Budget Senate Estimates

10 February 2010

Question: AR21
Topic: Outback Highway
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Senator Macdonald asked:

Senator IAN MACDONALD—Finally from me, there is a road that goes, effectively, from Cairns and Townsville to Perth—from Winton to Laverton—called the Outback Way. It goes right across the centre of Australia. I have been told that the outback highway council have done one of those very detailed maps and have combined with Hertz or Avis to do a program, marketed mainly into Germany, where you hire a car in Perth and drive across to Cairns and stop on the way at any number of magnificent natural sites. It is a two week thing, I understand. Are you aware of that? Are you helping with that? Do you have any stats on that or any projected spending assistance for that program?

Mr McEvoy—I am not specifically aware of it, but I would agree that the German travellers and Europeans generally love our open spaces and our outback. I know that a lot of work is done particularly in Germany but also in Switzerland, Austria and Scandinavia on that type of trip. I know that South Australia and the Northern Territory have one called the Explorer's Way, up through the middle from Adelaide to Darwin, or from Kangaroo Island to the Tiwi Islands. Our marketers in those markets would work with the wholesalers to put self-drive itineraries together for those people. But I do not have the specifics in front of me.

Senator IAN MACDONALD—On notice again, could I just alert you to that. Could you get your people to look at it to see if you are involved and, if you are not, if you could be and how you might be able to help in what is a very significant market, not just for tourism but for a lot of the Indigenous communities on the way. It is likely to be their lifeblood into the future.

Mr McEvoy—Absolutely.

Answer:

In 2006, 'The Outback Way - integrated tourism plan' received funding under Round 3 of the Australian Tourism Development Program. The Grantee was the Shire of Laverton in WA and they received \$487,390. The project is now complete. Funding was used to develop and implement an integrated tourism plan and to enhance the new experience of *Outback Way*. The project enhances awareness, safety, accessibility and marketability of the route and included the production of a DVD and improvements to signage through interpretive panels.

Tourism Australia promotes a number of road trips through the Journeys section on Australia.com and Tourism Australia would welcome an approach for the Outback Way to be promoted on Australia.com.