

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Additional Budget Estimates February 2009
Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government

Question No. BITRE 01

Division/Agency: Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics
Topic: Inclusion of Calliope in the Northern Australia Statistical Compendium
Hansard Page: 17 (24/02/09)

Senator MacDonald asked:

Senator IAN MACDONALD—Is it appropriate for me to ask you—it depends on how far along you are—what do you class as Northern Australia?

Mr Potterton—I might ask my colleague, Dr Dolman.

Dr Dolman—Essentially, we have adopted a definition of above the Tropic of Capricorn. However, to make that practical we have actually looked at local government areas that are around that boundary and statistical local areas around that boundary to make it possible to collect the data.

Senator IAN MACDONALD—That is interesting. Mr Gray sometimes uses catchments in the north, which is quite a different thing, but I am pleased to hear you using that. Local authorities that are sort of on the border of the north like Calliope, which is now the greater Gladstone council, would that be included? If you have any flexibility can I urge you to include it. It makes the statistics look a bit better.

Dr Dolman—I can take that on notice. My expectation is that it will be included if it is very close to that boundary. There are a number that have dropped down below the Tropic.

Senator IAN MACDONALD— Yes, and it is really part of the Central Queensland conglomerate, you would call it. When your material comes out, is it immediately publicly released, or does it go to the instructing Minister first and then is put out publicly when he gives the okay?

Mr Potterton—Yes, we certainly brief our Minister and then it is released by agreement with the Minister and his office.

Answer:

Calliope is below the Tropic of Capricorn and therefore is not included in the definition of Northern Australia used for the Statistical Compendium.

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Question No. BITRE 02

Division/Agency: Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics

Topic: Economic Cost of Ambient Transport Emissions and Transport Investment Appraisal

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator Williams asked:

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Report (INJCAT 113) estimates that 1420 people die from transport emissions each year (year 2000), mostly in urban areas. This means that more people die in our cities from transport emissions than road crashes. Therefore, can you please explain why this trauma, and the consequential economic cost is not accounted for in transport assessments, particularly road projects.

Answer:

The National Guidelines endorsed by the Australian Transport Council specify that external costs of local air pollution, which is the source of the adverse health impacts from transport, are to be included in investment appraisals. The Guidelines include specific values which are to be used in the appraisals (please see National Guidelines <http://www.atcouncil.gov.au/documents/NGTSM.aspx>)

States and Territories are required to carry out these transport investment appraisals in accordance with the National Guidelines.