

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 16

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Funding of the Eidsvold Agri-Forestry Project

Hansard Pages: 54-55 (22/05/07)

Senator O'Brien asked:

Senator O'BRIEN—In relation to the Eidsvold agri-forestry project—

Ms Page—That is RM Williams, yes.

Senator O'BRIEN—It received \$496,000 in funding through the Sustainable Regions Program as well, didn't it?

Ms Page—It certainly received funding under an earlier program. I do not have those details. It was a *Sustainable Regions* project. We cannot confirm the level of the funding contribution.

Senator O'BRIEN—What was the result of the funding? What was the outcome?

Ms McNally—We would have to take that on notice.

Answer:

As advised in a reply to House of Representatives Question in Writing No 4092 (on 9 September 2006), the funding contributed to the preliminary on-site work and planning for the Eidsvold Agri-forestry complex, which would include the Reginald Murray Williams Australian Bush Centre.

The outcomes included road and drainage works, a public toilet block, a geodesic dome, signage, main road site entry, project brokerage services and a sustainable Agri-forestry plan. The Eidsvold Shire Council has advised that the employment generated by this project included two full-time plant operators, three traineeships and over 50 part-time jobs. In the longer term, the project will increase business and employment opportunities in the region including employment of indigenous youth.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 17

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Funding of the Eidsvold Agri-Forestry Project

Hansard Page: 55 (22/05/07)

Senator O'Brien asked:

Senator O'BRIEN—Do you know what the sustainable agri-forestry plan, which was one of the outcomes for this funding, recommended?

Ms McNally—I would have to take that on notice.

Answer:

The *Sustainable Regions* programme funding contributed to the planning for the complex. In its acquittal of the project, the Eidsvold Council advised that a plan had been produced as part of the process. The Department does not hold a copy of the plan which is being sought from Eidsvold Council. The plan will be provided to the Committee as soon as it is received from the Council.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 18

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Darling Matilda Way Sustainable Region Advisory Committee Meetings

Hansard Page: 59 (22/05/07)

Senator O'Brien asked:

Ms McNally—The Darling Matilda Way Advisory Committee has received 32 applications. They met last on 16 May. I understand they are expected to be able to now make recommendations for pretty much all of the funding to the Minister.

Senator O'BRIEN—How many times did the Committee meet?

Ms McNally—They have met about nine or 10 times, I understand. We can clarify that.

Answer:

The Darling Matilda Way Sustainable Region Advisory Committee has met a total of ten times.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 19

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Sustainable Regions Funding for Metgasco Pty Ltd

Hansard Page: 60 (22/05/07)

Senator O'Brien asked:

Senator O'BRIEN—Which *Sustainable Regions* program funded the million-dollar grant to Metgasco Pty Ltd to accelerate the first supply of gas from the company's coal seam gas project in rural New South Wales?

Ms McNally—The Northern Rivers North Coast sustainable region.

Senator O'BRIEN—Are there matching funds or other funds that go towards that project?

Ms McNally—Yes.

Senator O'BRIEN—How much?

Ms McNally—I do not have the specific amounts on me. I will have to take that on notice.

Answer:

Metgasco Pty Ltd is providing funding of \$1,009,120 for the South Casino Gas project.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 20

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Regional Partnerships Programme – Mackay Riverside Aquatic Park

Hansard Page: 62 (22/05/07)

Senator O'Brien asked:

Senator O'BRIEN—Is it the case that the applicant for the Mackay Riverside Aquatic Park, Mackay City Council, received a letter from the Department informing them that they would have an answer regarding their application for a *Regional Partnership* grant for the aquatic park in February this year?

Dr Dolman—That is possible. Our normal practice when we receive an application is to send a letter advising when they may expect to receive a decision.

Senator O'BRIEN—I understand that an answer to their request for funds has not been provided. They were then told verbally that it would be provided in March. Have they now received any response?

Ms McNally—Not yet.

Senator O'BRIEN—Why not?

Ms McNally—The project is still being considered.

Senator O'BRIEN—When was the original application submitted?

Ms McNally—I do not have that information. I would have to take it on notice.

Senator O'BRIEN—I am told it was some time in the first half of 2006. That is an extraordinarily long time to wait, isn't it?

Ms McNally—I do not have all the detail with me. I will have to get back to you on that.

Answer:

The Department received an application for this project on 16 May 2006. This application was assessed against programme guidelines and was not approved for funding by the Ministerial Committee on 6 September 2006.

The applicant submitted a revised application for the project, which addressed the shortfalls in the original application, on 30 November 2006. The Ministerial Committee approved funding of up to \$4 million (GST-exclusive) for this project on 26 May 2007.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 21

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Regional Partnerships Programme – Ulverstone Wharf Project

Hansard Page: 63 (22/05/07)

Senator O'Brien asked:

Senator O'BRIEN—Has an application been received for the Ulverstone wharf redevelopment?

Ms McNally—I will have to take that on notice.

Senator O'BRIEN—If so, when was it received? Can we be advised of a timetable for its consideration?

Ms McNally—Yes.

Answer:

No.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 22

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Partnerships Programme – Nillumbik Council Project

Hansard Page: 63 (22/05/07)

Senator O'Brien asked:

Senator O'BRIEN—Has the Department received an application from the Nillumbik Council for \$3.3 million for a sports centre?

Ms McNally—I will have to take that on notice.

Answer:

The Department received an application under the *Regional Partnerships* programme seeking funding of \$3.5 million (GST-exclusive) towards a sports centre on 16 May 2007 from the Nillumbik Shire Council. This application is currently under assessment by the Department.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 23

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Year of the Outback 2010—Planning for Four-Yearly Cycle

Hansard Page: 64 (22/05/07)

Senator O'Brien asked:

Senator O'BRIEN—At the last Hearing, I asked when and how the consortium was formed. At that time, it was not known. Can you provide an answer now?

Ms McNally—No. Sorry, Senator, I do not have that information on me. We do not have the specific information. It is made up of some individuals and some community organisations. We would have to take that on notice.

Answer:

As indicated during the 22 May Hearing, details of the consortium can be found on their website at: <http://www.outbackinfront.com/>.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 24

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Year of the Outback 2010—Planning for Four-Yearly Cycle

Hansard Page: 64 (22/05/07)

Senator O'Brien asked:

Senator O'BRIEN—Will the consortium be providing a breakdown of expenditure to meet the requirements of the funding contract?

Ms McNally—Yes.

Senator O'BRIEN—Can that be tabled?

Ms McNally—Yes.

Answer:

Yes and a summary could be **made available to the Committee after the audited data is provided.**

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 25

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Regional Partnerships Programme – Karuah Community Hub Project

Hansard Page: 65 (22/05/07)

Senator O'Brien asked:

Senator O'BRIEN—We wait with interest. On 18 April, the Prime Minister announced that \$264,000 would be provided to the Karuah community hub. It does not appear on the DOTARS website. Is there any reason for that?

Ms McNally—The website was last updated in early March. It is currently being updated. It gets updated about every six to eight weeks so it will be included with the next update.

Senator O'BRIEN—When did the proponent lodge an application for funds?

Ms McNally—I will have to take that on notice.

Senator O'BRIEN—Who is the proponent?

Ms McNally—The Port Stephens Council.

Answer:

The Port Stephens Council lodged the application for funding under the *Regional Partnerships* programme for the Karuah community hub project on 15 November 2006. It was approved for funding of up to \$240,000 (GST-exclusive) by the Ministerial Committee on 23 March 2007.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 26

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Stage 1 Evaluation of the Regional Partnership Programme

Hansard Page: 66 (22/05/07)

Senator Sterle asked:

Ms McNally—A copy of the evaluation is available; it is on the DOTARS website.

Senator STERLE—Only stage 1 at this stage?

Ms McNally—Stage 2, I definitely know is there; I would have to check on stage 1.

Senator STERLE—How far are we away from stage 1 being put on the website?

Ms McNally—We put stage 2 on the website after that was completed. Stage 1 was related to internal process improvements. I am not clear that that was put on the website. That was completed before I started in this position, so I would have to go back and check that.

Answer:

The Stage 1 evaluation of the *Regional Partnership Programme* was not put on the Department's website.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 27

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Regional Partnerships

Hansard Page: 70 (22/05/2007)

Senator Sterle asked:

Senator STERLE—It certainly can. I agree with that. What proportion of Regional Partnerships program funding has gone to Australia's capital city and adjoining urban area projects?

Ms Page—We will have to take that on notice.

Answer:

16.5 per cent of *Regional Partnerships* funding has gone to Australia's major cities and adjoining urban areas.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 28

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Regional Partnerships

Hansard Page: 70 (22/05/2007)

Senator Sterle asked:

Senator STERLE—If you can, can you take on notice what proportion of program funding went to Sydney and Melbourne and adjoining urban area projects as well?

Ms Page—Certainly.

Answer:

1.6 per cent and 2.7 per cent, respectively of *Regional Partnerships* programme funding has gone to Sydney and Melbourne and their adjoining urban areas.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 29

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Funding for the Sugar Industry Reform Package

Hansard Page: 70 (22/05/07)

Senator Sterle asked:

Senator STERLE—Has DOTARS received progress reports on the expenditure of this money, including where the money has been spent and the specific purposes for which the money has been used?

Dr Dolman—Yes. That money was administered by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and we did receive a report back from that Department on how the money was used.

Senator STERLE—Can that be made available to the Committee?

Answer:

A copy of the progress report dated 27 October 2004 from the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries to the Department of Transport and Regional Services is **attached**.

[REGS 29 attachment]

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 30

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Atherton Tablelands Geographic Information System (@GIS)
Sustainable Regions Project

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

How has the @GIS project (funded under the *Sustainable Regions* program) met the outcomes it was intended to, as outlined on 194 of the Finance & Public Administration Reference Committee into Regional Partnerships and Sustainable Regions?

Answer:

The outcomes referred to above in the Committee report are: “*enable local governments, businesses, organisations and individuals to better understand the region and stimulate growth in investment, trade and the regional economy through electronic collection and manipulation of data.*”

The final report for the project has indicated that the project is now an established on-going business currently employing 10 staff and expects this to increase by between 2 and 5 staff over the coming 12 months.

The @GIS showed an ongoing commitment to training by employing an average of 2 trainees at a time throughout the project and developing and initially running Queensland's only TAFE accredited Spatial Information Systems course increasing skills capacity in the region.

The @GIS now supports three Tableland Councils' IT infrastructures and manages all of their GIS data sets. They are also engaged in several core projects being undertaken by the Shire Councils:

- including the Integrated Services team responsible for the design and implementation of integrated services across the Shires as part of the State Government's *Size, Shape and Sustainability* program.
- The Asset Management Team, which has carriage of standardising technical, financial and spatial asset data sets and asset management systems across the Shires.

The @GIS continues to develop and maintain practical relationships with the Natural Resource Management (NRM) groups of the wider northern region including the development of a data-share agreement and process between the NRM groups and the Region of Council groups.

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The @GIS maintains a high profile with the Emergency Services agencies in the aftermath of *Cyclone Larry* and has successfully completed the Atherton Tablelands Wildfire Mitigation project.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 31

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Atherton Tablelands Geographic Information System (@GIS)
Sustainable Regions Project

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

May details of the payments made and milestones achieved by the proponent for the @GIS project be provided?

Answer:

MILESTONE	DATE	AMOUNT	DESCRIPTION
		(GST inclusive)	COMPLETED MILESTONE ACTIVITIES
Signing of funding agreement	December 2003	\$178,802	Commence project. Payment processed 24 December 2003
1	May 2004	\$527,039	GIS development, teacher training, school support and purchase/lease equipment Payment processed 2 June 2004
2	Feb 2005	\$372,913	GIS development, staff training, school support Payment processed 9 March 2005
3	June 2005 - Mar 2006	\$339,985	GIS development, appoint trainees purchase/lease equipment Payment processed 1 Feb 2006
4	June 2006	\$184,801	GIS development teacher training, student research Payment processed 30 May 2006
5	Dec 2006	\$0	Project completed Final Audited Report Received 5 March 2007

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 32

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Breakdown of Regional Partnerships and Sustainable Regions Projects
by Electorates

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

May the Department provide a copy of a breakdown of all *Regional Partnerships and Sustainable Regions* projects by electorate be provided?

Answer:

Details of approved projects are available on the Department of Transport and Regional Services website:

http://dynamic.dotars.gov.au/regional/approved_grants/grants_regpart.cfm.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 33

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Gunnedah Grains to Ethanol Project

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

What is the address used by the proponent of the Gunnedah Grains to Ethanol project, Primary Energy?

Answer:

The proponent's address is Primary Energy Pty Ltd, PO Box 1734, Tamworth, NSW 2340.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 34

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Gunnedah Grains to Ethanol Project

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

What did the initial payment to Primary Energy paid on 29 September 2004 provide for and how was it used?

Answer:

The initial payment was provided to Primary Energy in order to commence work on the project activity. The activities commenced and covered by this payment were:

- plant design and specifications;
- planning NSW/Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Planning Focus;
- Cradle to Grave Production Life Cycle Analysis;
- legal fees;
- project management costs;
- travel costs, and
- promotional activities.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 35

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Gunnedah Grains to Ethanol Project

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

When was Primary Energy made aware they would require an Environmental Impact Statement from the NSW Government?

Answer:

The requirement to prepare and conduct the Environmental Impact Statement and seek NSW approval for the project through Planning NSW, was part of the project from commencement.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 36

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Gunnedah Grains to Ethanol Project

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

When was an EIS sought by Primary Energy?

Answer:

The NSW Planning Director-General's requirement documents were issued to Primary Energy by Planning NSW on 4 February 2006. The environmental studies were completed in December 2006. Planning NSW is awaiting a draft planning approval application.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 37

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Gunnedah Grains to Ethanol Project

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

May copies of the Plant Design and Specification be provided, as according to Answers Given on Notice, they have been achieved under Milestones 3 and 4 of this project?

Answer:

A copy of the plant design and specifications can be found at www.umwelt.com.au/gunnedah-ethanol/press_release/R03-Project_Description_Report-V2%20FINAL1.pdf.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 38

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Gunnedah Grains to Ethanol Project

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

How much of the total grant money provided to Primary Energy has been used for travel?

Who was the recipient of the funds for the purpose of travel?

Answer:

\$109,976.

The recipient of these funds was Primary Energy Pty Ltd.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 39

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Gunnedah Grains to Ethanol Project

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

How much of the total grant money provided to Primary Energy has been used for consultancy services?

Who has provided consultancy services to Primary Energy?

Answer:

\$764,220 has been used for consultancy and project management services.

Consultancy services have been provided to Primary Energy by:

- Delta T – Designs & Specifications
- Umwelt – Environmental Studies
- CSIRO – Production Life Cycle Analysis
- Axis RM – Risk Management, Financial
- RMC Consulting – Logistics and Marketing
- Shedden Uhde – Design Engineers
- Linde – Anaerobic Digester Technologists
- AJ Sackett – Fertilizer Production Technologists
- Flo Dry – Thermal Sludge Drying Technologists

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 40

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Gunnedah Grains to Ethanol Project

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

When will the final report be provided, as required under Milestone 4 of this project?

Answer:

The final report is scheduled as a post activity report and is currently due on 30 September 2007 but this is dependent upon completion of the project activity, which includes the Planning NSW's approval.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 41

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Gunnedah Grains to Ethanol Project

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

What does Milestone 5 require the proponent to complete?

Answer:

Milestone 5 relates to the completion of the activity, including finalising the financial package, which includes contributions to the payment of legal fees, an environmental impact assessment report, product life cycle analysis, tax structure advice, plant design and specification, development application fees and staffing costs.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 42

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Funding for the Reginald Murray Williams Australian Bush Centre

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

Can a copy of the Sustainable Forestry Plan, completed under the Sustainable Agriforestry Project with a grant from Sustainable Regions project, be provided?

Answer:

The plan will be provided to the Committee as soon as it is received from Eidsvold Council.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 43

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Funding for the Reginald Murray Williams Australian Bush Centre

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

If not, what were its recommendations?

Answer:

Refer to answer to REGS 42.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 44

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Funding for the Reginald Murray Williams Australian Bush Centre

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

Has there been any consultation to date with the Eidsvold Shire community on the establishment of the RM Williams Bush Centre in Eidsvold?

Answer:

Yes.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 45

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Funding for the Reginald Murray Williams Australian Bush Centre

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

If so, what have consultations determined about the community's views on the development of the RM Williams Bush Centre?

Answer:

A survey of local and regional businesses and community groups was undertaken on:

- Possible elements to include in the Centre;
- The potential of the Centre to link with other local and regional cultural and heritage attractions;
- Opportunities to involve local youth;
- Opportunities to stage events at the Centre;
- Possible educational elements, key themes or displays;
- Key issues and constraints to the establishment of the Centre; and
- Key opportunities from the establishment of the Centre.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 46

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Mackay Science and Technology Precinct

Hansard Page: 49 (22/05/07)

Senator O'Brien asked:

May a copy of the Business Plan, completed in March 2007 be provided?

Answer:

Yes (see **attachment**).

[REGS 46 attachment – not included. Available from the committee secretariat on request.]

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 47

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Darling Matilda Way Sustainable Regions Programme Funding for the Ilfracombe Motel Project

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

What is the objective of providing \$589,076 grant to Ilfracombe Motel?

Answer:

Darling Matilda Way Sustainable Regions programme funding will be used to refit the heritage post office building including providing a motel reception area, and a meeting room. A motel component will also be constructed on the vacant land adjacent to the post office. The project will cater to an under-serviced tourism market in the region.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 48

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Darling Matilda Way Sustainable Regions Programme funding for the
Ilfracombe Motel Project

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

Have matched funds been provided?

Answer:

The project approval is conditional on the proponent, Miac Enterprises Pty Ltd, is contributing \$1,029,154 (GST-exclusive) in cash and \$39,673 (GST-exclusive) in-kind to the project. The condition will be addressed as part of the funding agreement negotiations which are yet to be finalised. Ilfracombe Shire Council is to contribute \$5,000 (GST-exclusive) in cash and \$209,042 (GST-exclusive) in-kind to the project.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 49

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Darling Matilda Way Sustainable Regions Programme Funding for the
Ilfracombe Motel Project

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

Has a funding agreement been put in place for this project?

Answer:

A funding agreement is currently being negotiated.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 50

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Darling Matilda Way Sustainable Regions Programme Funding for the
Ilfracombe Motel Project

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

If so, can a copy of the activity milestones and funds allocated for this project be provided?

Answer:

The activity milestones are not yet available as the funding agreement has not yet been finalised.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 51

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Darling Matilda Way Sustainable Region Advisory Committee

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

Is John Williams on the Darling Matilda Way Steering Committee?

Answer:

Mr Williams was appointed to the Darling Matilda Way Sustainable Region Advisory Committee in March 2005. Mr Williams resigned from the Committee on 13 April 2006.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 52

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Coral Coast Mariculture

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

On what date did the Wide Bay Burnett Sustainable Region Advisory Committee (WBBSRAC) call for expressions of interest?

Answer:

Expressions of interest were called by the WBBSRAC on a number of occasions. The Department does not have records that identify specific dates.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 53

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Coral Coast Mariculture

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

On what date did the proponent of the Coral Coast Mariculture project lodge an expression of interest? In what form was that expression lodged? Can a copy be provided? If not, why not?

Answer:

An Expression of Interest form in the name of Keechee Australia Pty Ltd was received, dated 14 April 2004.

The Expression of Interest form is **attached**.

[REGS 53 attachment]

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 54

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Coral Coast Mariculture

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

May the process for assessing the Coral Coast Mariculture expression of interest against the project assessment criteria and Wide Bay Burnett regional priorities?

Answer:

The expression of interest (EOI) was considered by the Wide Bay Burnett Sustainable Region Advisory Committee (WBBSRAC) against the regional priorities and *Sustainable Regions* programme assessment criteria. The Executive Officer of the WBBSRAC prepares a project summary to assist the Committee in its consideration of the EOI.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 55

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Coral Coast Mariculture

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

On what date did the Executive Officer of the WBBSRAC make a recommendation to the WBBSRAC on the expression of interest? What recommendation was made?

Answer:

The Executive Officer provides a project assessment summarising the project and highlighting benefits and risks against the selection criteria. The Executive Officer does not make recommendations to the WBBSRAC on expressions of interest.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 56

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Coral Coast Mariculture

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

On what date/s did the WBBSRAC meet to consider the recommendation on the expression of interest? Can a copy of the record/s of meeting be provided? If not, why not?

Answer:

29 April 2004.

The minutes are not attached as they do not specifically refer to a decision on this particular project. However, at this meeting, 11 Expressions of Interest (EOI) including the Portunus EOI were invited to submit applications.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 57

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Coral Coast Mariculture

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

On what date did the WBBSRAC determine that the proponent of the Coral Coast Mariculture project should be invited to submit a full funding application?

Answer:

29 April 2004.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 58

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Coral Coast Mariculture

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

On what date was the proponent of the Coral Coast Mariculture project invited to submit a full funding application?

Answer:

11 May 2004.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 59

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Coral Coast Mariculture

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

What assistance did the Executive Officer of the WBBSRAC provide the proponent of the Coral Coast Mariculture project in the development of the funding application?

Answer:

As part of his duties, the Executive Officer provides assistance to proponents in the development of the funding application to ensure that the regional priorities and programme assessment criteria are addressed.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 60

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Coral Coast Mariculture

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

What role did Starfire Solutions Pty Ltd play in developing the funding application?

Answer:

It is understood that this organisation assisted Coral Coast Mariculture in raising capital for the project.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 61

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Coral Coast Mariculture

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

On what date was the Coral Coast Mariculture funding application lodged? What quantum of funding was sought? Did the funding application include a budget detailing private investment in the project? Did the funding application include a business plan? Can a copy of the funding application be provided? If not, why not?

Answer:

An application from Portunus Pty Ltd (formerly known as Keechee Australia Pty Ltd) was lodged on 17 January 2005. The application sought \$500,000 (GST-exclusive) from *Sustainable Regions* funding. The application specified \$902,142 cash contribution from the applicant and \$390,000 in-kind (from the applicant and other organisations). A copy of a business plan and supporting documentation were received on that date.

A copy of the funding application is **attached**.

[REGS 61 attachment- not included. Available from committee secretariat on request.]

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 62

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Coral Coast Mariculture

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

If the Coral Coast Mariculture funding application was revised, can the Minister (a) advise on what date/s the application was revised and (b) provide a copy of any revised applications? If a copy of any revised applications can not be provided, why not?

Answer:

The application was not revised. However, the WBBSRAC did note at its meeting on 7 April 2005 that the applicant had changed to Coral Coast Mariculture Pty Ltd from Portunus Pty Ltd.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 63

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Coral Coast Mariculture

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

Can details of the process for fully and competitively assessing the Coral Coast Mariculture funding application against the project assessment criteria and *Wide Bay Burnett* regional priorities?

Answer:

The WBBSRAC assessed the application against both the programme assessment criteria and *Wide Bay Burnett* regional priorities. A project assessment was provided to the Committee by the Executive Officer of the application against the assessment criteria and regional priorities.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 64

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Coral Coast Mariculture

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

On what date did the WBBSRAC meet to consider its recommendation on the Coral Coast Mariculture project? Can a copy of the record/s of meeting be provided? If not, why not?

Answer:

3 February 2005 and 5 July 2005.

Extracts of the records of the meetings are **attached**.

[REGS 64 attachment]

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 65

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Coral Coast Mariculture

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

On what date did the WBBSRAC submit a recommendation to the Minister on the Coral Coast Mariculture funding application? What recommendation was made?

Answer:

On 12 July 2005 the WBBSRAC wrote to the Minister recommending funding for the application.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 66

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Coral Coast Mariculture

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

Did the Department of Transport and Regional Services conduct due diligence checks before making a recommendation to the Minister? Can the details of those due diligence checks be provided?

Answer:

Yes. Conducting due diligence checks are part of the Department's process of assessing applications. The Department does not disclose the content of this information.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 67

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Coral Coast Mariculture

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

What funding recommendation did the Department make to the Minister?

Answer:

The information sought is in the nature of policy advice to the Government which I do not propose to release.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 68

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Coral Coast Mariculture

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

Did the Department and/or the Minister seek any further advice from the proponent during funding consideration? If so, what advice was sought?

Answer:

No.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 69

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Coral Coast Mariculture

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

Did the Member for Hinkler make any representations to the Minister and/or the Department in relation to the Coral Coast Mariculture funding application?

Answer:

No.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 70

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Coral Coast Mariculture

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

On what date did the Minister approve a \$550,000 *Sustainable Regions* grant for the Coral Coast Mariculture project?

Answer:

26 September 2005.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 71

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Coral Coast Mariculture

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

Were any conditions placed on the grant approval, including evidence of minimum private investment in the project? If so, can the Minister provide details be provided?

Answer:

Approval was conditional on the provision of evidence that the proponent's full contribution of \$900,000 had been raised.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 72

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Coral Coast Mariculture

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

On what date was (a) the WBBSRAC and (b) the proponent informed of the funding decision?

Answer:

(a) and (b) 26 September 2005.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 73

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Coral Coast Mariculture

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

On what date was the funding publicly announced?

Answer:

10 October 2005.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 74

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Coral Coast Mariculture

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

On what date did the Department commence negotiations with the project proponent on a funding agreement?

Answer:

7 October 2005.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 75

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Coral Coast Mariculture

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

On what date did the project proponent submit a funding agreement?

Answer:

The funding agreement was signed on 9 November 2005.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 76

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Coral Coast Mariculture

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

Did the funding agreement include milestones, performance targets, reporting arrangements and arrangements for payment? If so, can the Minister provide details of (a) milestones (b) performance targets (c) reporting arrangements and (d) arrangements for payment?

Answer:

Yes.

The details can be seen from the **attached** documents.

[REGS 76 attachments A, B, C & D – not included. Available from the committee secretariat on request.]

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 77

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Coral Coast Mariculture

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

Can a copy of the funding agreement be provided? If not, why not?

Answer:

Yes. See REGS 76.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 78

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Coral Coast Mariculture

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

What funding has the project received, by quantum and date?

Answer:

The payment amounts and dates are as follows:

- \$150,000 November 2005
- \$150,000 April 2006
- \$150,000 May 2006
- \$ 25,000 April 2007
- \$ 25,000 June 2007

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 79

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Coral Coast Mariculture

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

Have payments been made to Coral Coast Mariculture Pty Ltd. If not, what individual or entity has received the funding?

Answer:

Yes.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 80

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Coral Coast Mariculture

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

Has the payment of grant money been subject to satisfactory compliance with the terms of the funding agreement and the submission of reports including (a) an independent audit of accounts (b) acquittal of expenditure and (c) evidence of satisfactory performance and achievement of milestones? If not, can the Minister provide details?

Answer:

Yes.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 81

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Coral Coast Mariculture

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

Can it be confirmed that Coral Coast Mariculture Pty, Australian Company Number 113 675 228, was registered on 5 April 2005, six months prior to the announcement of the *Sustainable Regions* grant?

Answer:

An extract from the Australian Business Register indicates that the company named above was registered on 5 April 2005.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 82

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Coral Coast Mariculture

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

Do the *Sustainable Regions Program Guidelines* provide that "retrospective funding is not permitted"?

Answer:

Yes.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 83

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Coral Coast Mariculture

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

Have the operations of Coral Coast Mariculture Pty Ltd have not been funded retrospectively?

Answer:

No.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 84

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Coral Coast Mariculture

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

How is the contraction of aquaculture infrastructure on a site at Bundaberg Park, including buildings, ponds and technical facilities, progressing?

Answer:

The project has been completed at Bundaberg Port and Littabella, Queensland.

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: REGS 85

Division/Agency: Regional Services

Topic: Coral Coast Mariculture

Hansard Page: Written Question

Senator O'Brien asked:

How many full-time jobs has the project generated since the grant was announced in October 2005?

Answer:

The extra jobs generated by this project are to be reported in the evaluation report due in August 2007.