

MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT AND REGIONAL SERVICES

Question No. 1235 & 1236

Senator O'Brien asked the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government, Territories and Roads, upon notice, on 19 September 2005:

With reference to the Coalition's 2004 Election commitment to contribute \$1.5 million to improve the Tasman Highway between Nunamara and Targa:

- (1) Who made the decision to make this commitment on behalf of Commonwealth and on what date?
- (2) Who made the commitment public and on what date?
- (3) Is the Commonwealth's funding commitment contingent upon the provision of funds from the Tasmanian State Government or other sources; if so: (a) what other sources must contribute funds to this project in order for the Commonwealth to meet its commitment? (b) who decided to make Commonwealth funding contingent upon the provision of funds from other sources and on what date? (c) on what date, in what manner and by whom was the Tasmanian State Government and/or other potential providers of funds made aware that the Coalition's funding commitment to this project was contingent upon the provision of funds from other non-Commonwealth sources? and (d) why is this condition of funding not specified in the Coalition's 2004 Election document entitled *A Stronger Economy, a Stronger Australia: The Howard Government Election 2004 Policy: Strengthening Tasmania's Economy and Building a Better Community*?

Senator Campbell - The Minister for Local Government, Territories and Roads has provided the following answer to the honourable senator's question:

- (1) The Government made the decision to commit \$1.5 million towards the upgrade of the Tasman Highway, between Nunamara and Targa, during the 2004 election campaign.
- (2) The Liberal Candidate for Bass, Michael Ferguson, issued a media release on 28 September 2004, announcing the Government's commitment to provide \$1.5 million on condition that the Tasmanian Government must meet the remaining costs for the project. The Government's Tasmanian policy statement *Strengthening Tasmania's Economy and Building a Better Community*, released on 6 October 2004, reaffirmed the \$1.5 million commitment.
- (3) Yes – a matching State Government contribution is a condition of funding under the AusLink Strategic Regional Programme.
 - (a) The project requires a matching contribution of \$1.5 million from the Tasmanian Government.
 - (b) The decision to make funding contingent on the provision of funds from other sources was made by the Government during the 2004 election campaign.

- (c) The Hon Jim Lloyd, Minister for Local Government, Territories and Roads, wrote to his State counterpart, the Hon Bryan Green, Tasmanian Minister for Infrastructure, Energy and Resources, on 17 November 2004 outlining the Government's election commitments. Minister Lloyd wrote again to Minister Green on 11 April 2005 providing formal confirmation of the Government's commitments to the four projects and seeking his confirmation that matching funding would be provided for all four projects, including the Tasman Highway project.
- (d) It is a matter for the Government how it chooses to announce funding commitments.