

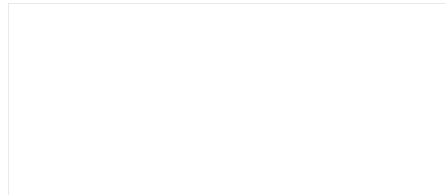
Question No : 285

Question : Road Funding Within the Northern Territory

Question Date : 29/06/93

Member : Mr CARTWRIGHT

To : MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS



1. What was the amount of Commonwealth local road funding passed to the Northern Territory as a specific purpose payment in the last calendar year.
2. How much of this funding was -
 - (a) retained by the Northern Territory government to spend on roads in unincorporated areas; and
 - (b) given to incorporated town councils.
3. What was the basis of any split of funding.
4. For that portion retained by the Northern Territory government, was any of the funding applied in the area of roads within and to Aboriginal communities; if so, how much.
5. Did the Northern Territory government apply any of its own funds for roads in non-Aboriginal communities and areas outside of the town councils; if so, how much.
6. What was the amount claimed as Northern Territory government funds spent on roads for the purposes of the Commonwealth Grants Commission assessments in the area of Aboriginal community services.
7. Did the amount referred to in question 6 reflect -
 - (a) all expenditure on roads in these areas; or
 - (b) maintenance expenditure.
8. If the answer to question 7(b) is yes, what amount was spent on construction in these areas.
9. Are any of the funds received from the Commonwealth for

local roads retained by the Northern Territory government; if so, what is the amount retained and what is passed to incorporated councils.

10. If retention of Commonwealth funds by the Northern Territory government is permitted by the Commonwealth government, what is the basis for determining this amount.
11. What is the method for determining the distribution for Commonwealth government funds on-passed.
12. What criteria are applied by the Department of Transport and Works to determine whether a particular rural road is an Aboriginal community access road, or a public road.
13. Is it a Northern Territory government policy, or a planned policy, to have Aboriginal communities responsible for access roads to their communities beyond the council boundaries.
14. Is the Northern Territory government spending its own funds on local roads within and to Aboriginal communities; if so, are these amounts still included within the Commonwealth Grants Commission assessment procedures.
15. What is the anticipated net change to the Northern Territory's total financial position with regard to road funding from the Commonwealth under the new arrangements compared to the old.

ANSWER

The Member for Victoria River will be aware that government accounting is based on fiscal rather than a calendar year. Questions 1 to 8 relate to the fiscal year 1991-92. Questions 9 to 14 relate to the current arrangements with the Commonwealth and are applicable to the 1992-93 fiscal year.

1. 1991-92 - Total \$15.881m.
2. (a) Northern Territory government \$12.277m
(b) Municipal Councils \$ 3.604m
3. Split was based on a weighted road lengths of the 'maintained' road networks excluding the Aboriginal community and access roads.
4. No - these roads were excluded from this. The Local Roads Funding Distribution Principles endorsed by the then federal minister Mr Peter Morris for the 1988-89 distribution, and this exclusion was confirmed by the Hon Kim Beazley on 3 December 1990.
5. Yes - \$5.9m.
6. \$3.5m.

7. (b).
8. \$1m.

Current Arrangements 1992-93

9. Yes - \$8.3m retained for Territory government local roads.
 - NIL is passed on as funds for councils are paid directly by the Commonwealth to the Northern Territory Local Government Grants Commission for distribution.
10. Distribution determined by Commonwealth on basis of the 14 000 km of local roads retained by Territory government.
11. Distribution for funds to councils is by the Northern Territory Local Government Grants Commission.
12. Aboriginal community access roads are 'private' roads under Aboriginal title, that is permit required for access, and service only Aboriginal communities.
13. When Aboriginal councils wish to maintain roads beyond their boundaries - it will be negotiated. Note: Community councils have formal boundaries.

For associations with no formal boundaries, the road responsibilities have been negotiated. The objective is to achieve contiguous boundaries between community councils/associations.
14. Yes - in 1992-93 the Territory government expended \$1.8m on Aboriginal community access roads. Approximately \$1.4m of recurrent expenditure will be eligible for assessment under the Aboriginal Community Service Category of the Commonwealth Grants Commission.
15. Net loss of approximately \$2.3m.