

Question No: 72

Question: Department of Education Demographic Projections

Date: 12/11/91

Member: Mr BELL

To: MINISTER for EDUCATION

1. Why are Department of Education demographic projections so frequently incorrect for the Haasts Bluff and Finke schools, given the following statistics -

(a) Haasts Bluff - demographic projection, 18 children; average attendance, 26 children; enrolment, 31; and

(b) Finke - demographic projection, 36 children; average attendance, 45-50; enrolment, 60.

ANSWER

1. (a) Haasts Bluff School (as at August each year)

Projected Actual

1988 25 25

1989 29 26

1990 31 31

1991 23 26

Demographic projections for Haasts Bluff School indicate a high level of accuracy, given figures are calculated 12 months in advance.

2. (b) Finke School (as at August each year)

Projected Actual

1988 38 47

1989 42 43

1990 46 59

1991 42 56

Finke School's statistical returns indicate enrolment has not reached 60.

A number of Aboriginal families have returned to the Finke area in recent years. The program offered at Finke School has encouraged higher attendance.

The transience of populations in small Aboriginal communities makes 12 month enrolment projections difficult.

The demographer makes the best use of all available knowledge of school communities, including information from the Head Teacher and Regional Superintendent. It is not possible to predict ad hoc population shifts which occur from time to time in remote communities.