LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

National Secondary School Computer Fund in the Northern Territory

Mr Mills to Minister for Education and Training

As at 1 March 2010:

1.   What is the status of the roll-out of the National Secondary School Computer Fund in the Northern Territory:

2.   How much is allocated within the funding model for the initial software licence and for future software upgrade requirements respectively?

3.   What advice is provided to schools by the Department to guide their purchase decisions?

4.   Are the new computers allocated to an individual student or allocated to a senior school class?

5.   Is the Northern Territory approach based upon the acquisition approach of other jurisdictions,   if so which jurisdiction(s)?

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ANSWER

1.   What is the status of the roll-out of the National Secondary School Computer Fund in the Northern Territory:

Rounds 1 and 2 of the National Secondary School Computer Fund have been completed with 1504 computers being installed in Northern Territory Government schools. These computers combined with existing computers in schools mean there is now a minimum of one computer for every two students in years 9 – 12.

A total of $3.4m has also been allocated to schools to meet the on-costs associated with providing power, networks and other support for the additional computers being provided under this program.

In 2011 and 2012 a further 5130 computers will be installed in schools resulting in a one to one computer to student ratio.

2.   How much is allocated within the funding model for the initial software licence and for future software upgrade requirements respectively?

An amount of $50 per computer per year has been set aside to meet the charges for the standard suite of Microsoft software products that are installed on all NT school computers. This fee is an annual charge and covers the costs for any upgrades and future releases of the software.

Schools would need to allocate additional funds if they wish to install other commercially licensed software.

3.   What advice is provided to schools by the Department to guide their purchase decisions?

All computers are purchased through a period contract with Dell Australia. A small set of standard models are offered that meet the needs of typical users in schools. All computers are supplied with the NT Department of Education and Training (DET) standard software configuration and have a three year on-site warranty. Schools may purchase alternative makes and models of computers if they have specific requirements.

4.   Are the new computers allocated to an individual student or allocated to a senior school class?

At this time most computers are allocated for shared use in the schools with access based on their physical locations in schools. As the number of computers increases in 2010 and 2011, schools will move to personal allocation of computers with a variety of models to suit the needs of year 9 - 12 students in urban middle and senior schools and in comprehensive schools in remote areas.

5.   Is the Northern Territory approach based upon the acquisition approach of other jurisdictions,   if so which jurisdiction(s)?

All jurisdictions have used centralised acquisition and service management systems to provide economies of scale and ensure a reasonable quality of service can be achieved with the available funds. DET adopts a similar approach to other jurisdictions in terms of the centralised acquisition of hardware, software and support services related to the National Secondary School Computer Fund.