

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Mr Yan to the Minister for Health:

Howard Springs Quarantine Facility – Tenders

- 1. On 22 October 2020, the Department of Health awarded a \$3.5 million contract to Karen Sheldon Pty Ltd for the Provision of Catering Services for the International Quarantine Accommodation Facility at Howard Springs.**

Why was this tender not released publicly?

The contract was awarded by the National Critical Care and Trauma Response Centre (NCCTRC). Due to the rapid activation of the international repatriation program which commenced on 23 October 2020, a public tender process was not achievable.

- 2. How many businesses were invited to submit a select tender?**

One.

- 3. How were these businesses selected?**

As a result of the declaration of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) as a notifiable disease, the Minister for Business and Innovation approved the COVID-19 emergency procurement exemption process in accordance with the *Procurement Act 1995* on 12 March 2020, which enables a select procurement process.

Karen Sheldon was identified as the most suitable catering service delivery model for the cohort of internationally repatriated Australians. Karen Sheldon is a local NT company with the capacity to deliver high quality food that supports mood and mental health for those in quarantine. Karen Sheldon Catering met other objectives including diversity, education and

Aboriginal and rehabilitation employment including Aboriginal apprenticeship programs.

Catering is a well-documented area of risk for quarantine management and includes managing people in adverse and difficult environments where food makes a significant difference to people's ability to cope with challenges.

4. When did the Department first go out to select tender?

NCCTRC directly approached Karen Sheldon under the COVID-19 Emergency Exemption process on 16 October 2020.

5. How long was the select tender open?

Not applicable.

6. What is the term of the contract with Karen Sheldon Pty Ltd?

The contract with Karen Sheldon Catering is open-ended until no longer required.

7. Why was this tender required when there is an existing \$24 million contract for accommodation, catering, transport and facility management that was awarded to Northern Rise Village Services Pty Ltd on 24 August 2020?

The international repatriation program is funded by the Australian Government and was required to operate separately to the existing quarantine arrangements at Howard Springs, to minimise risk of exposure between the various cohorts of travellers and staff. The catering contract is separate to arrangements in place under the TFHC contract with Northern Rise.

8. Why was this \$24 million contract procured through a select method?

The select method was enabled due to COVID-19 Emergency exemption. It was activated in response to the unprecedented and evolving pandemic emergency situation

9. What select businesses were invited to submit a quote?

Directly approached under the COVID-19 Emergency Exemption process.

10. Did the awarding of this \$24 million contract to a Perth WA based company require a certificate of exemption?

The services of Northern Rise were procured under the COVID-19 Emergency Exemption.

11. Why were Territory businesses eliminated from this tender?

Northern Rise Village Services Pty Ltd has proven performance and capacity to respond to the scale of the response required at the facility. It has a direct business relationship through its parent company within the NT hospitality industry. No other Territory Enterprises were identified with the capacity and capability to provide these services within the tight timeframe.