

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Ms Boothby to the Minister for Small Business:

Small Business Survival Fund

The latest Auditor-General's Report states that of the \$50 million funding committed to the Small Business Survival Fund, \$2 million has been quarantined for applications that had been impacted but are not initially eligible under the documented initiative parameters, with the CEO being delegated the authority to exercise his discretion in regard to these applicants.

Questions:

1. Why was the Minister's authority delegated to the CEO?
2. Of the \$2 million quarantined, what funding has been distributed to date?
3. Who was recipient of this funding?
4. How did the CEO demonstrate his authority in regard to these applicants?
5. Is there a time limit of distribution of the \$2 million funding quarantined?
6. If this \$2 million funding is not fully spent, what will happen to it?

Answer:

- The Small Business Survival Fund (SBSF) was part of the NT Government's Jobs Rescue and Recovery Plan and supported local businesses through the partial or full shut-down measures enforced as at midday on 23 March 2020.
- The SBSF approved funding allocation was \$50 million.
- In the days immediately following the SBSF's establishment, the Industry Board formed to provide oversight and governance advice, initially considered a small contingency of \$2 million would be prudent to allow for consideration of potential unforeseen issues around eligibility.
- As the grant program quickly progressed it became clear through engagement with industry and the department that a contingency was not required and was therefore never formally established.
- At the conclusion of the program, 1,731 applications were received, 1,312 businesses were supported and a total of \$45.5 million in grant funding was approved.
- The remaining \$4.5 million was re-allocated to other COVID-19 stimulus grant programs.