

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE

Question Taken on Notice

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Date: 12 June 2025

From: Mr Dheran Young

To: Hon Jinson Charls MLA

Portfolio: Minister for People, Sport and Culture

Agency: Department of People, Sport and Culture

Subject: **Funding for Regional Council Libraries**

QUESTION:

The question is in regard to funding for libraries in community councils and how that funding is allocated to each community council, in particular in remote areas and West Daly, considering there is a large population base there.

ANSWER:

The Northern Territory Government effectively funds local government to deliver public library services through 4 sources:

- Public Library Funding Agreement (direct grant to council)
- Library Resource Allocation (internal Library and Archives NT (LANT) budget, amount that councils can spend on local physical collections)
- Community Internet Service (internal LANT budget, total cost of program is spread across all sites and allocated at \$4,000 per site per annum)
- Lease costs (NT Property Management budget, for Karama, Nightcliff and Katherine libraries)

The overall aim of the funding model is for each council to receive a fair total allocation, based on population.

As outlined above, the funding may be provided through different sources. For this reason, the City of Darwin (for example) gets less in the grant than population would suggest, because it receives more through lease costs.

Further adjustments are occasionally made to this general model:

- Population is weighted for remoteness according to Commonwealth Grants Commission weightings, which directs more funding into regional areas.
- Councils are allocated a certain level of base funding in their grants based on the number of physical libraries they operate, reflecting the staffing costs required to operate libraries.