



Standing Committee on Environment, Climate Change and Biodiversity

Inquiry into Annual and Financial Reports 2021-2022 **ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE**

Asked by Ms Nicole Lawder MLA on 1 November 2022: Ms Rebecca Vassarotti MLA took on notice the following question(s):

Reference: Hansard [uncorrected] proof transcript 1 November 2022, Page 18

In relation to: Heritage Grant – First Nations Groups

MS LAWDER: Are you able to provide for the committee a list of particular sessions you have provided to First Nations groups or organisations over the financial year? Also, do you provide an ongoing engagement? I think there are a couple of First Nations people groups listed in the Heritage Act. What is your ongoing engagement with them?

Ms Vassarotti: Are you talking about the registered Aboriginal organisations?

MS LAWDER: Yes.

Mr Burkevics: We could certainly provide some general information around how the program is promoted across the region and any specific measures that may have been taken with specific First Nations groups. We could certainly take that on notice. There is, of course, a wide range of opportunities, so certainly general information of how that program is advertised would be entirely possible.

MS LAWDER: I am interested in specific sessions you might have delivered—information sessions.

Ms Vassarotti: We can certainly see what we have got. Certainly my understanding of the work of the grants officer is that it is a little bit more organic. It is not that three sessions happen on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday; it is actually a much more integrated process in terms of the grants officer going out and connecting with groups as they are doing their business. I sure we will be able to provide—

MS LAWDER: It would appear that that is not actually working, in terms of encouraging them to apply.

Ms Vassarotti: I guess I would just like to make the observation around the registered Aboriginal organisations: they are a specific type of organisation that is seen to have experts that are contracted

to do specific work to support the identification of First Nations history. They may well be involved in organisations and in activities that could be appropriate to be engaged in heritage grants, but they are specific entities that do specific works under the act, so they may not be actually the most appropriate people to be doing community based grants engagement activity.

MS LAWDER: Alright. Thanks.

Rebecca Vassarotti MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

Following the announcement of the 2022-23 ACT Heritage Grants Program, an email was sent to the four Representative Aboriginal Organisation with a link to the grant's webpage. The Manager Traditional Custodian Engagement within the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate was also notified who distributed the information to the Dhawura Ngunnawal Caring for Country Committee and members of the Ngunnawal community.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Environment, Climate Change and Biodiversity

Signature: 

Date: 10/11/2022

By the Minister for the Environment, Rebecca Vassarotti MLA