

Question on Notice

No. 354

Asked on 21 May 2013

MR RICKUSS ASKED THE TREASURER AND MINISTER FOR TRADE (MR NICHOLLS)—

QUESTION:

Will the Minister advise if the Federal Labor Government has paid the outstanding monies owed for flood reconstruction under the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements and how much money is still outstanding from Federal Labor?

ANSWER:

The Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA) provides urgent financial assistance to disaster affected communities, and is jointly funded with the Commonwealth Government providing generally 75 per cent of eligible expenditure.

Since March 2011, the Commonwealth has forwarded \$5.2 billion in disaster assistance, with \$4.2 billion being advance payments relating primarily to disasters of 2010-11.

The State has submitted audit certificates to the Commonwealth Government in relation to the NDRRA expenditure for 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12 as the basis for Commonwealth payments under NDRRA.

The Queensland Audit Office issued a qualified audit opinion for expenditure in 2009-10, 2010-11 and part of 2011-12 in respect of restoration of assets of local councils and personal hardship and distress payments. The Commonwealth Government's share of this expenditure is approximately \$725 million. The Commonwealth Government has advised it requires unqualified audit certificates for State expenditure to be eligible for reimbursement. The Queensland Government is continuing to gather the evidence required to ensure that qualified NDRRA expenditure meets the Australian Government's eligibility requirements for entitlement to the \$725 million.

A letter has also been forwarded to the Deputy Prime Minister and Treasurer seeking assistance in resolving this issue, requesting the Australian Government provide the Auditor-General with guidance that the previous levels of evidence should apply to events prior to the National Partnership Agreement (NPA) and the current standard of evidence can apply to events covered by the NPA. No response has been received.