

# QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE

## Legislative Council

ASKED BY: Hon Meg Webb MLC

ANSWERED BY: Hon Roger Jaensch MP, Minister for  
Aboriginal Affairs

With reference to the undertaking made by Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, the Honourable Roger Jaensch MP, to the Legislative Council Estimates Committee B on Thursday the 8th of June 2023 to seek advice on whether the Aboriginal Land Council Tasmania (ALCT) is, in fact, the only statutory body in Tasmania not specifically funded for a finance officer, can the government please:

### QUESTIONS:

1. Detail whether that promised advice was sought and received, and if so when it was received, and also detail the content of that advice;
2. State whether there are current discussions underway regarding providing the necessary funding for the ALCT to secure a Chief Financial Officer; and
3. Detail what steps have been undertaken, including any consultation with ALCT, to ensure this statutory organisation can meet its financial reporting obligations?

ANSWER:

Last year I asked the former Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment to provide advice on ALCT's financial position and budget requirements, taking into account issues raised by the Tasmanian Audit Office. Following this, the Government provided ALCT with additional funding of \$30 000 to support ALCT to address administrative requirements identified by the Tasmanian Audit Office.

In June this year I asked the Department of Premier and Cabinet to provide updated advice on ALCT's financial position, taking into account the Tasmanian Audit Office's report from 2023.

I have been advised by the Department that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to funding for statutory bodies. I have also been advised that if a grant deed is required by a statutory body, it must take into account any requirements under legislation. Specifically, for the ALCT, Section 20 of the *Aboriginal Lands Act 1995* states:

*20. Staff*

*(1) The Council may employ such persons as it considers necessary to enable it to perform its functions.*

*(2) Subject to any relevant award, industrial agreement or enterprise agreement, the terms and conditions of persons employed under subsection (1) are as determined by the Council.*

Given this, the ALCT grant deed does not specify how ALCT should direct their funding.

The Department of Premier and Cabinet is currently finalising a grant deed for \$369 000 for the 2023–24 financial year, which includes an additional \$55,000 on top of the usual allocation of \$314,000. The Government also provided \$600,000 to ALCT earlier this year to support a comprehensive interpretation project at Wybalenna, Flinders Island.

I can confirm that the Government is currently considering a request from ALCT to fund a Chief Financial Officer. In the meantime, I am advised that Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania is working with ALCT to review and develop policies and procedures that will support administrative functions.

Once the Tasmanian Government's proposed amendments to the *Aboriginal Lands Act 1995* have passed both houses of Parliament, the implications of the reforms on ALCT's operational requirements will be better understood, which will inform future permanent funding arrangements.

APPROVED/NOT APPROVED

Hon Roger Jaensch MP  
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

Date:

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