

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO**  
**2016-2017 Additional Estimates Hearings**

**Outcome Number: Cross Outcome - Across Programs**

**Question No: SQ17-000002**

**Topic: Government Waste**

**Hansard page: Written**

**Senator Nick Xenophon** asked:

Given that government and opposition politicians have all raised concerns over time and had policies on government waste:

1. Is there a central government authority responsible for the elimination of waste?
2. If so:
  - a. Is there a government wide definition on the meaning of 'waste', and if so, what is that definition?
  - b. How does this central government authority monitor and manage waste within the Department?
  - c. Is there a central government mechanism (e.g. phone number, email address, web site) for public servants or contractors to report Departmental waste?
  - d. How much Departmental waste was identified by the central government authority in FY 13/14, FY 14/15 and FY 15/16?
3. If not:
  - a. Is there a departmental definition on the meaning of 'waste', and if so, what is that definition?
  - b. What are the Department's arrangements for monitoring and managing waste?
  - c. Is there a central Departmental mechanism (e.g. phone number, email address, web site) for public servants or contractors to report Departmental waste?
  - d. How much waste was identified by the Department in FY 13/14, FY 14/15 and FY 15/16?
4. In either case:
  - a. Can Departmental officers or contractors report waste anonymously?
  - b. Are they afforded a protection if they do so?

**Answer:**

1. & 2. Refer to the Department of Finance's response to Additional Senate Estimates Question F128.
3. Not applicable. Refer to the Department of Finance's response to Additional Senate Estimates Question F128.
4.
  - a. Yes, public officials can make anonymous disclosures under the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2013* (PID Act).
  - b. Yes, the PID Act affords protections to public officials who make public interest disclosures.