

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
FAMILIES, HOUSING, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND
INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO
2012-13 Supplementary Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: Cross

Question No: 208

Topic: NFP Contracts

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Siewert asked:

Given the Departmental relationship to the sector via its grants process, what actions has the Department taken to introduce a report-once, use-often framework for information collected from NFP entities in relation to the application for, reporting on and acquittal of grants?

Answer:

FaHCSIA applies a risk-based approach to grants management, which in practice means applying different approaches to controls such as funding agreements, selection, acquittals, reporting, and monitoring - based on the level of risk. This risk-based approach factors in the nature of the grant program, the value of the grant, an organisation's capacity (including governance structures) and their history of performance under funding arrangements with the Department. As a result of this approach, only those funding relationships with high risk program, organisation or service delivery are required to submit independently audited financial acquittal statements.

In addition to streamlining acquittal requirements for service providers, the Department has also improved arrangements for service providers through the use of:

- Single funding agreements for organisations covering multiple programs
- Reduced and simplified project and program performance indicators
- Plain Language Funding Agreements and streamlined performance monitoring and reporting requirements
- A risk-based approach to the funding relationship
- Use of a Standard Chart of Accounts

The ACNC Implementation Taskforce has started working with Commonwealth agencies in order to minimise duplicative reporting and to ensure effective and secure information sharing. Work to streamline reporting is ongoing but already there has been significant engagement between FaHCSIA and the ACNC.