

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Supplementary Budget Estimates

17 October – 18 October 2012

Question: SBT 351-356

Topic: Public Service Efficiency (ASIC)

Written: Received from Committee – 26 October 2012

Senator BUSHBY asked:

351. Please detail how the department/agency will achieve savings over the forward estimates through pursuing further efficiencies in the way the public service operates (see media release by the Minister for Finance and Deregulation and the Special Minister of State of 25 September 2012 http://www.financeminister.gov.au/media/2012/mr_1982012.html).

In addition, please provide the following detail:

352. How will reductions in air travel spending be achieved? What is the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?
353. What restrictions will be implemented for business flights? What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?
354. How will the use of external consultants and contractors be reduced? How will this impact on the Department/agency? What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?
355. How will the department/agency manage moving recruitment advertising online? Will all future recruitment advertisement be online only? If not, explain why. What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?
356. How will printing costs be reduced? Explain if and how the department/agency will reduce its printing costs by five per cent, or if it will not, why not? How will it be determined what documents will no longer be printed? What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?

Answer:

- 351 ASIC will primarily continue to pursue efficiencies over the forward estimates through review of its goods and services expenditure. However it is likely that, faced with further one-off efficiency dividends, required savings will necessitate staff cost reductions.
- 352 On-going use of Whole of Government (WoG) procurement arrangements will aid in managing ASIC travel expenditure combined with continued emphasis on video conferencing, notably for staff related interactions. ASIC does not specifically target travel related savings over the forward estimates. Business Unit budgets have been reduced in

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total to realise the savings, however, Business Units have the flexibility to align expenditure with their priorities and business plans.

353. ASIC manages its business travel expense in line with WoG procurement arrangements and with reference to specific conditions captured in certain staff members' employment agreements. As per the response to question 352, ASIC does not specifically target business travel related savings over the forward estimates.

354. ASIC met its committed FY 2012 contractor workforce target (23% of overall FTE) on December 31 2011. The contractor FTE target for December 31, 2012 is 31 and ASIC is tracking to target. ASIC does not specifically target contractor related savings over the forward estimates.

External consultants are generally used, as required, to provide specialist skills not available in ASIC, or when large new programs (both government mandated and internally generated) are to be delivered. Associated costs are dependent upon the identification and timing of future programs and therefore consultancy related savings are not specifically targeted over the forward estimates.

355. ASIC recruitment advertising is largely already online. ASIC has only advertised in print/press in the last 12 months for positions for SES or equivalent positions, Indigenous placements or for appointments in ASIC's regional office in Traralgon as per the APSC guidelines.

356. ASIC has recently installed security controlled multifunction devices (MFD) that improve monitoring of printer use and that purge unprinted items automatically, leading to reduced printing costs. These savings are consistent with Government targets and contribute to ASIC's environmental sustainability targets. As for other costs mentioned above, ASIC does not specifically target printing related savings over the forward estimates.