

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates 26 May-6 June 2014

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Outcome/Program: 1.1 Prime Minister and Cabinet

Topic: Transfer to five main themes

Senator: Senator Cory Bernardi

Question reference number: 245

Type of Question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 11 July 2014

Number of pages: 2

Question:

1. How many programmes and activities were transferred to PM&C?
2. Can you tell me how many contracts there are and with how many providers? That means many have multiple funding agreements. Would they often have different contracts and different acquittal processes?
3. Is this an efficient process making best use of resources?
4. What steps are you taking to reduce red tape with the new programmes?

Answer:

1. More than 150 Indigenous Affairs Programmes and activities were transferred to the Department in 2013 and consolidated under the new Indigenous Advancement Strategy – see PM 261
2. As at 10 June 2014, there were more than 2,160 agreements, not including agreements and contracts funded through the National Partnership Agreements. The agreements are with 1,031 organisations. Of these, 693 have a single funding agreement. The remaining 337 organisations cover 1,480 agreements. The acquittal process will vary by programme and programme component.
3. These 2160 plus agreements with 1031 organisations are administered through eight different grant management systems, with a variety of reporting timeframes, requirements and acquittal processes. This is an inefficient way to deliver services. On 13 May 2014, the Minister for Indigenous Affairs, Senator the Hon Nigel Scullion announced the implementation of the Indigenous Advancement Strategy. The Strategy streamlines around 150 Indigenous programmes and activities into five flexible broad based programmes.
4. With the introduction of the Indigenous Advancement Strategy and the streamlining of programmes and activities into the five broad based programmes, it is

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expected that efficiencies will be achieved through cutting duplication and reducing the administrative burden on both the Department and on service providers.

These efficiencies will be achieved through a number of ways, most notably moving from previous arrangements of multiple contracts managed across a number of Australian Government agencies to one standardised funding agreement. This will allow organisations to focus their time and effort on service delivery, not on administration.