

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: Staff reductions

Senator: Senator the Hon Jan McLucas

Question reference number: 266

Type of Question: Written

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

Number of pages: 1

Question:

1. How much of the \$53.9 million funding cut over the forward estimates for Prime Minister and Cabinet will be achieved through staff reductions (as a dollar figure)?
2. Why is a 'spill and fill' necessary to reduce staff numbers in the Indigenous Affairs group? When was the decision made to undertake a 'spill and fill'?
3. How will responsibility be restructured within the Indigenous Affairs Group at the completion of the 'spill and fill'?
4. Could the department provide a list of the APS level and salary of each of the 200 applicants for voluntary redundancy from within the Indigenous Affairs Group.
5. Are there plans to further reduce staffing levels within the department?
 - a. If so, how will this reduction be achieved?
 - b. What APS levels will be targeted?
 - c. Will there be a reduction of senior executives over the next 12 months?

Provide the number of senior executive positions that will be affected and the particular Outcomes or departmental areas from which these positions will be culled.

Answer:

1. It is anticipated that the Department will operate within its budget by carefully managing staff and supplier expenditure, including a reduction in staffing numbers of between 350 and 400.
2. A restructure was necessary to reduce staff numbers at the SES Band 1 level in the Indigenous Affairs Group as there were more staff than positions available. The decision was made on 11 May 2014.
3. Responsibility will be redistributed to reflect changes to the way in which programs will be delivered in the future and by ensuring SES Band 1 roles are consistent with published Work Level Standards for SES officers.

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4. The response to PM40 for February 2014 Senate estimates stated that ‘voluntary redundancies were announced on 27 March 2014’. Since then, in the period to 26 June 2014, 261 individuals from the Indigenous Affairs Group applied for a voluntary redundancy. Their classifications are outlined in the table below.

Classification	Total
APS 2 – APS 4*	26
APS 5	31
APS 6	81
EL1	78
EL 2	45

*Responses have been provided at a higher aggregate level to ensure the anonymity of the individuals is protected.

Due to the large number of individuals, it would require an unreasonable diversion of employee resources to provide the salary of each individual.

5. No current plans in addition to the staffing reduction of 350 to 400 already identified.