

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES 2013-2014

Finance Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of Finance

Outcome/Program: General

Topic: Coalition Advisory Service

Senator: Faulkner

Question reference number: F50

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: Friday, 17 January 2014

Number of pages: 3

Question:

With reference to the newly established Coalition Advisory Service:

1. When was the service established?
2. What is its role?
3. Does the service undertake media monitoring or research activities?
4. What is its budget in 2013-14?
5. Which departments or agencies provide funding or support services?
6. Where is the service located in Parliament House?
7. How many of the 10 staff positions allocated to the Coalition Advisory Service have been filled?
8. Have all staff positions been advertised?
9. Is Canberra the work base for all staff of the service? If not, please provide details of non-Canberra work bases.
10. What electronic equipment has been provided to the Coalition Advisory Service? For each type of equipment please provide
 - a) description
 - b) unit value
 - c) number and
 - d) providing department or agency.
11. Is any electronic equipment provided to the Coalition Advisory Service located in a place other than the service's Parliament House location? If so, please provide details.
12. What monies, if any, have been expended on
 - a) furnishings
 - b) fittings
 - c) maintenance
 - d) building works at the service's Parliament House location since 7 September 2013? Which departments or agencies provided funding?
13. Who provides stationery to the service? What is the cost of stationery supplies, per month, since its establishment?

14. What has been the cost of travel by staff of the service, by month, since its establishment?
15. Who asked the Department of Finance to provide “somewhat of a home department service” to the Coalition Advisory Service? When and in what form was that request provided? Were any Ministers consulted on the request?
16. Are media monitoring services provided to the service? If so,
 - a) which department or agency provides these services and
 - b) what is the cost?
17. Are newspaper or magazine subscription services provided to the service? If so, please provide details including (a) titles (b) whether online or hardcopy or both (c) providing department/agency and (d) costs.
18. What “home department services” does the Department provide to the Coalition Advisory Service?
19. Does the Department of Finance provide “home department services” to any other offices except the office of portfolio ministers?

Answer:

1. 29 October 2013.
2. The Coalition Advisory Service (CAS) has been established to provide training and support to Government Members, Senators and their staff, to assist them in servicing their constituents and to ensure the efficient and effective operation of electorate offices.
3. This is a matter for the Chief Government Whip in the House of Representatives.
4. The Department of Finance (Finance) manages the Home Department budget as a whole. Home Department includes the offices of the Minister for Finance, the Special Minister of State, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Finance, and the Coalition Advisory Service.
5. As at 19 November 2013, Finance and the Department of Parliamentary Services (DPS).
6. Room MG3.
7. As at 19 November 2013, six positions had been filled.
8. This is a matter for the Chief Government Whip in the House of Representatives.
9. Canberra is the work base for the six staff members employed as at 19 November 2013.
10. This question should be referred to DPS.
11. This question should be referred to the DPS.
12. As at 19 November 2013:
 - a)–c) Finance has not expended any monies.
 - d) The Ministerial Wing Support Team within Finance organised for a re-arrangement of desks and partitions in MG 3. Two contractors were engaged for two hours each, at a total cost of \$269.80 (Incl. GST).
13. Finance. As at 19 November 2013, no stationery supplies had been supplied.
14. As at 19 November 2013, the total travel costs for CAS staff was \$2,411.19.

15. By convention this unit is supported as part of the broader home department services provided to Finance's portfolio ministers.
16. As at 19 November 2013, no media monitoring services had been provided by Finance.
17. As at 19 November 2013, no newspaper or magazine subscriptions had been provided by Finance.
18. As at 19 November 2013, no home department services had been provided by Finance.
19. No.