

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee
Answers to questions on notice
Environment portfolio

Question No: 130

Hearing: Supplementary Budget Estimates

Outcome: Corporate

Programme: Corporate Strategies Division

Topic: Portfolio Wide – Government Payment of Accounts

Hansard Page: N/A

Question Date: 27 November 2013

Question Type: Written

Senator Ludwig asked:

- a) From 7 September 2013 to date, has the department/agency paid its accounts to contractors/consultants etc in accordance with Government policy in terms of time for payment (i.e. within 30 days)?
- b) If not, why not? Provide details, including what has been the timeframe for payment of accounts? Please provide a breakdown, average statistics etc as appropriate to give insight into how this issue is being approached)
- c) For accounts not paid within 30 days, is interest being paid on overdue amounts and if so how much has been paid by the portfolio/department agency for the current financial year and the previous financial year?
- d) Where interest is being paid, what rate of interest is being paid and how is this rate determined?

Answer:

Department of the Environment (the Department)

- a) For the period 7 September to 31 October 2013, 99 per cent of accounts have been paid within 30 days. This is above the 90 per cent standard set by the former Department of Innovation, Industry, Science, Research and Tertiary Education.
- b) Accounts not paid within 30 days are due to delays in the submission of invoices for processing. The department has actively promoted the correct business practices in regard to the payment of accounts in 30 days including:
 - Communicating the standard and better practice guidelines; and
 - Communicating payment performance to divisions and senior executives each month.
- c) No interest has been paid this financial year. \$49.99 in interest was paid last financial year.
- d) The general interest charge (GIC) daily rate on the day the payment was due is used to calculate the interest payable. For the interest paid in the previous financial year, the GIC daily rate was 0.028 per cent.

Director National Parks (the DNP)

- a) For the period 7 September to 31 October 2013, 95 per cent of accounts have been paid within 30 days.
- b) Accounts not paid within 30 days are due to delays in the submission of invoices for processing. The DNP has actively promoted the correct business practices in regard to the payment of accounts in 30 days including:
 - Communicating the standard and better practice guidelines; and
 - Communicating payment performance to divisions and senior executives each month.
- c) No.
- d) Not applicable.

Bureau of Meteorology (the Bureau)

- a) For the period 7 September to 31 October 2013, 97.3 per cent of accounts have been paid within 30 days.
- b) Accounts not paid within 30 days are due to:
 - Invoices received in advance of goods being received by the Bureau; and
 - Certain technical goods need to be tested upon receipt as per contractual agreements prior to payment.
- c) No.
- d) Not applicable.

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA)

- a) For the period 7 September to 31 October 2013, 95.4 per cent of accounts have been paid within 30 days.
- b) Accounts not paid within 30 days are usually associated with an invoice being sent to the project manager rather than the Accounts Unit. If the project manager is absent then the invoice cannot be processed. Suppliers are being encouraged to send their invoices to the generic GBRMPA finance e-mail address.
- c) No.
- d) Not applicable.

Murray-Darling Basin Authority (the Authority)

- a) For the period 7 September to 31 October 2013, 98.1 per cent of accounts have been paid within 30 days.
- b) Accounts not paid within 30 days are due to:
 - Accounts being in dispute; or
 - Delays in approving accounts for payment within the Authority.

- c) No.
- d) Not applicable.

National Water Commission (the Commission)

- a) For the period 7 September to 31 October 2013, 100 per cent of accounts have been paid within 30 days.
- b) Not applicable.
- c) Not applicable.
- d) Not applicable.

Sydney Harbour Federation Trust (the Trust)

- a) For the period 7 September to 31 October 2013, 96 per cent of accounts have been paid within 30 days.
- b) Reasons for accounts not being paid within 30 days include:
 - Dispute over the amount to be paid;
 - Issue of an invoice prior to goods/services being received;
 - Non-acceptance of the goods/services provided; and
 - Errors in identified bank account or payee details.
- c) No.
- d) Not applicable.

Clean Energy Regulator (CER)

- a) For the period 1 September to 31 October 2013, approximately 86 per cent of accounts have been paid within 30 days.
- b) Accounts not being paid within 30 days are primarily the result of administrative delays, such as delayed confirmation of the receipt of goods or services before invoices are passed for processing.
- c) No.
- d) Not applicable.

Climate Change Authority (the Authority)

- a) For the period 7 September to 31 October 2013, 90.1 per cent of accounts have been paid within 30 days.
- b) Of the five invoices not paid within 30 days:
 - Two were paid within 60 days; the delay resulting from a system issue in entering the contract agreement;

- Two were paid within 90 days; the delay resulting from the invoices being dated prior to the work being satisfactorily completed. These were paid as soon as the work was satisfactorily completed; and
 - One was paid outside 90 days; the invoice was misplaced and replacement invoice provided.
- c) No interest has been paid this financial year. \$129 in interest was paid last financial year.
- d) The general interest charge (GIC) daily rate on the day the payment was due is used to calculate the interest payable.