

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

Question No: 154

Hearing: Supplementary Budget Estimates

Outcome: Corporate

Programme: Corporate Strategies Division

Topic: Staffing

Hansard Page: N/A

Question Date: 27 November 2013

Question Type: Written

Senator Urquhart asked:

In announcing the detail of the recruitment freeze, the APSC said “no new non-ongoing arrangements are to commence, or existing non-ongoing arrangements to be extended, without agency head approval” your departmental annual report say that there are 388 number of non-ongoing staff in you department.

- a) How many of these non-ongoing roles do you expect to keep/how many of these people will lose their job in the next 12 months as their contracts expire? How will the work these staff have been doing now be managed?
- b) Of the positions that you expect to approve the extension of the non-ongoing contract, as they fulfil a critical role, why aren't these positions filled by a ongoing position?
- c) What will be the impact on client service if these contracts are not renewed.

Answer:

- a) The majority of the Department's non-ongoing employees are employed to meet seasonal operational demands in the Australian Antarctic Division and national parks managed by the Department. Excluding these seasonal roles it is possible that the Department may lose up to 33 non-ongoing employees as their contracts expire over the next 12 months. The criticality and specialist nature of these roles will continue to be monitored as part of the decision-making process around any extension of contracts.
- b) The non-ongoing positions that will be extended or refilled are seasonal and therefore not appropriate to be filled on an ongoing basis. Other non-seasonal positions that are extended are likely to be associated with tasks that are of a non-ongoing/finite nature.
- c) The impact on client service is expected to be minimal as key areas of client contact in the national parks and Antarctica are excluded from the reduction of non-ongoing employees in the Department.