

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Supplementary Budget Estimates 2013-2014**

Outcome 1 - Early Childhood Education and Child Care

Department of Education Question No. ED0142_14ED0142_14

Senator Ruston provided in writing.

Question

Short time frame for EYQF

1. Can the department please explain the timeframes around the EYQF process including when the Guidelines were introduced, and when applications opened and closed?
2. What is the usual timeframe for managing application processes such as these? Do the EYQF timeframes reflect standard practice?
3. Is it true that EYQF funds were exhausted after only 12 hours?
4. Once the funds were exhausted, was notice provided to potential applicants not to continue with their application? If not, why not?
5. Was the sector not advised that the EYQF was exhausted so that services would continue to sign up to EBA?

Answer

1. The Early Years Quality Fund (EYQF) Program Guidelines were published on the department's website on Friday 19 July 2013 and applications opened at 11 am on Tuesday 23 July 2013.
2. The *Commonwealth Grant Guidelines* (Section 8.4) requires agency staff to choose methods that will promote open, transparent and equitable access to grants. In particular, agency staff should ensure that publicly available grant opportunities are notified in ways that provide all potential grant applicants with reasonable opportunity to apply. For other programs that the department administers the period of time between the release of documentation and the opening of a grants process is usually three to four weeks.
3. The funding cap of \$300 million was reached within 13 hours of the application process opening.
4. The department's website was not updated once funds were exhausted. This was a decision of Government.
5. No further information was provided to applicants until 22 October 2013.
6. See response to Question 4.