

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee:
Answers to written Questions on Notice Budget Estimates 2014–15
Parliamentary Departments Portfolio
May 2014**

Department	Parliamentary Budget Office
Topic	Legal costs
Senator	Senator Ludwig
Question reference number	102
Type of question	Written

Question

- 1 List all legal costs incurred by the department or agency since Additional Estimates in February, 2014.
 - a List the total cost for these items, broken down by source of legal advice, hours retained or taken to prepare the advice and the level of counsel used in preparing the advice, whether the advice was internal or external.
 - b List cost spend briefing Counsel, broken down by hours spend briefing, whether it was direct or indirect briefing, the gender ratio of Counsel, how each Counsel was engaged (departmental, ministerial).
 - c How was each piece of advice procured? Detail the method of identifying legal advice.

Answer

For the period 1 March 2014 to 31 May 2014, the Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO) incurred \$10,360.87 (GST exclusive) of legal expenses. \$2,390.80 was as a result of cost sharing arrangements with other parliamentary departments. The PBO did not engage these services directly.

During the period, the PBO engaged Ashurst Australia directly to provide legal advice at a cost of \$7,970.07 (GST exclusive). These services are broken down as follows:

Cost (GST exclusive)	Counsel used	Hours	Nature of advice	Procurement method
\$3,970.07	Partner	0.18	External	Prequalified tender
	Senior Associate	3.24		
	Lawyer	7.06		
\$4,000.00	Unknown	Flat rate	External	Prequalified tender