

**FINANCE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION LEGISLATION COMMITTEE
QUESTIONS ON NOTICE BUDGET ESTIMATES 2019 – 2020
FINANCE PORTFOLIO**

QoN No.	Agency	Senator who asked	Broad Topic	Question	Type of Question: Hansard Page & Hearing Date or Written
F001	ASC Pty Ltd	Patrick	Fully Cycle Dockings – Western Australia	<p>Senator PATRICK: In terms of your preliminary view, in the information that you've provided to Defence, do you see anything that fetters the movement of full cycle dockings to Western Australia? ...I understand Defence will make some considered opinion. I'm talking about the advice you've given to Defence. That's purely within your purview.</p> <p>Mr Whiley: At this stage what we've provided them is data, not advice.</p> <p>Senator PATRICK: What sort of data? Costing data? People data?</p> <p>...</p> <p>Mr Whiley: ... what we've provided to Defence is some initial preliminary data regarding some of the options. It's not a complete view. Anything I might say is only ASC opinion. It's not—</p> <p>Senator PATRICK: I appreciate that.</p> <p>Senator Cormann: We'll take it on notice to see whether there's something we can sensibly and appropriately provide.</p>	Proof Hansard, 4 April 2019, pages 70-71
F002	ASC Pty Ltd	Patrick	Future Submarine Sustainment	<p>Senator PATRICK: The agreement that you've signed with Naval Group to, in some sense, do work with them on future submarines—is it possible to provide the committee, on notice, with some details as to the scope of the cooperation? I don't want any of the commercial terms.</p> <p>Mr Whiley: I can provide a copy of the framework arrangement, if you'd like that, on notice.</p>	Proof Hansard, 4 April 2019, page 73
F003	ANI Pty Ltd	Patrick	Key Milestones – Osbourne South	<p>Senator PATRICK: Thank you for your opening statement. You mentioned a couple of milestones there, including raising of the wall and supply and installation of cranes in building 20.</p> <p>Mr Knox: Yes.</p> <p>Senator PATRICK: I presume that you have at least some sort of project milestone list?</p> <p>Mr Knox: Yes.</p> <p>Senator PATRICK: Can you provide that to the committee, please?</p> <p>Mr Knox: We can certainly provide some further transparency to what the key milestones are. I raised those two because they're really the two critical ones for us to deliver in the time frame of Q1 2020.</p> <p>...</p> <p>Senator PATRICK: ... I'd like two things, actually: I'd like the milestone list, as was the case at the start of the project, and then the date on which they're being completed or are projected to be completed as it currently stands. Those dates may be different.</p> <p>Mr Knox: We certainly can provide you with what the key milestones are looking forward to ensure that we deliver the project by March 2020, which is effectively one year from now.</p> <p>Senator PATRICK: Sure. I'd like to see what the milestones were when you initiated the project or got to the commencement of the spending of the first dollar, and then where those milestones were in terms of actual achievement of the milestones and planned achievement for those that remain.</p> <p>Mr Knox: We can certainly provide some milestones going forward</p>	Proof Hansard, 4 April 2019, page 77
F004	Finance	McAllister	Foreign Aid Budget	<p>Senator McALLISTER: ... Minister, last time we were here I asked you about a speech that you gave where you valued the savings in the foreign aid budget over the medium term at \$80 billion.</p> <p>Senator Cormann: Yes.</p> <p>Senator McALLISTER: In that same week, Senator Wong asked officials in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade about those projections. The official said: 'I'm not able to substantiate that. I don't know how Minister Cormann calculated that figure.' Ms Adamson—</p> <p>Senator Cormann: I can help you.</p> <p>Senator McALLISTER: Well, yes, perhaps you can. I should say, in fairness to the department, that Ms Adamson said: I'm aware of that figure but it goes beyond our working focus at the moment. Perhaps you could just explain it and tell us whether there is any update that could be provided in light of the budget?</p> <p>Senator Cormann: In terms of an update, I'd have to take that on notice, but I can explain it. Obviously, we inherited certain policy settings when it came to the forward trajectory of foreign aid funding. We made certain decisions at various budgets and budget updates in relation to that. Instead of letting the level of indexation run to the—there was a trajectory which involved a pretty steep level of indexation of the foreign aid budget linking it to a percentage of GNI. We made a decision to maintain the level of foreign aid funding at about \$4 billion per annum. If you look at the expenditure now compared to what the expenditure would have been if we had stayed on the trajectory that we inherited, then there is a saving of about \$80 billion over the medium term. That number comes from advice that I received from my excellent department.</p>	Proof Hansard, 4 April 2019, page 85
F005	Finance	McAllister	Australia's Indo-Pacific Engagement	<p>Senator McALLISTER: On 29 March this year the foreign minister announced \$44 million to establish, 'A new and innovative national foundation for Australia-China relations.' ... Where will I find it in the BP2? I'm looking at the foreign affairs decisions.</p> <p>Senator Cormann: Can we get back to you? If you go to page 81 of budget paper 2:</p>	Proof Hansard, 4 April 2019, page 87

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				<p><i>Australia's Indo-Pacific Engagement—enhanced engagement in Asia</i></p> <p>...</p> <p><i>\$57.4 million to strengthen and expand our bilateral relationships, including through leadership exchanges, and maritime cooperation including maritime domain awareness and illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing—et cetera. As I said, it is a subset of a broader measure.</i></p> <p>Senator McALLISTER: Why are there no costings or profiling available for that measure?</p> <p>Senator Cormann: They are available. They are published.</p> <p>Senator McALLISTER: Where are they published?</p> <p>Senator Cormann: Sorry, this was a decision taken but not yet announced within MYEFO, and that's why it says, if you look at the second-last paragraph in the measure:</p> <p>Funding for this measure has already been provided for by the Government.</p> <p>Senator McALLISTER: Yes, but isn't it reasonable to provide the profiling? ...</p> <p>Senator Cormann: If you want to ask the question, 'Can you provide us with the profile?' then we can provide that for you on notice.</p> <p>...</p> <p>Senator Cormann: ... The level of expenditure is disclosed in the measure description. The reason we're having these processes is so you can ask us questions about what you are interested in beyond what is published. If you are saying to me that you would like to see the funding profile over the forward estimates of this measure then I'm very happy to oblige and provide that on notice.</p> <p>Senator McALLISTER: I would.</p>	
F006	Finance	McAllister	Decisions Taken But Not Yet Announced	<p>Senator McALLISTER: ...Can we go through the decisions taken but not yet announced that were in MYEFO that have now been announced.</p> <p>Senator Cormann: We usually take these questions on notice. This was a question that you asked on 19 February, and we have an answer to it which is up to date until 7 March 2019, but I'm happy to update it further for you as soon as possible on notice. Are you happy for me to just table that again?</p> <p>Senator McALLISTER: Yes, it would be good to have that tabled.</p>	Proof Hansard, 4 April 2019, page 89
F007	Finance	McAllister	Energy Assistance Payment - Timeline	<p>Senator McALLISTER: All right. Can we move on to the energy assistance payment? ... When was the department requested to prepare that costing?</p> <p>...</p> <p>Mr Fredericks: ... The department was asked to cost the extension of the energy payment to Newstart... on the evening of the budget. So, that's on the evening of 2 April.</p> <p>Senator McALLISTER: What was the nature of that request—was it an email, a telephone call, a letter?</p> <p>Mr Fredericks: I think it was a conversation, in the first instance, with the Department of Social Services... I think we became aware from DSS that there would be a necessity to cost the proposal—the extension to Newstart recipients and the other classes.</p> <p>Senator McALLISTER: That was a conversation with you, Mr Fredericks?</p> <p>Mr Fredericks: It wasn't with me. It was with one of my staff members—I'd have to check that.</p> <p>Senator McALLISTER: Around what time was that?</p> <p>Senator Cormann: We'll have to take that on notice. I've taken the questions on timetables on notice in the session with Prime Minister and Cabinet and we'll provide you a comprehensive time line on notice.</p> <p>...</p> <p>Senator McALLISTER: Okay. Mr Fredericks, Ms Huxtable said that you finalised the policy the following morning—so, Wednesday morning. What time and to whom was that provided?</p> <p>Senator Cormann: I'll take that on notice. I've taken questions on the time line on notice and I will provide that answer on notice.</p>	Proof Hansard, 4 April 2019, page 91
F008	Finance	Farrell	Advertising Campaigns below \$250,000	<p>Dr Helgeby: I can take you through campaigns that are currently in the media, and we divide those into those which are subject to the guidelines, above \$250,000, and then there are a number below \$250,000.</p> <p>Senator FARRELL: Yes, you kindly went through that distinction quite recently</p> <p>Dr Helgeby: So, campaigns currently running—would you like me to run through them?</p> <p>Senator FARRELL: Yes, that would be very helpful, thanks.</p> <p>Dr Helgeby: I'll be as efficient as I can.</p> <p>...</p> <p>Dr Helgeby: Then there are a number below \$250,000. Would you like me to go through those?</p> <p>Senator FARRELL: That would be helpful, I think.</p> <p>Dr Helgeby: There are quite a lot of those.</p> <p>Ms Huxtable: Would it be more helpful for us to provide those on notice?</p> <p>Senator FARRELL: Or table them? Is that possible?</p>	Proof Hansard, 4 April 2019, pages 99–100

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				<p>Ms Huxtable: I just don't think we have them in a form where we could table them, but we could seek to create that form.</p> <p>Senator FARRELL: Could you?</p> <p>Ms Huxtable: We'll seek to create that form and table that.</p> <p>Senator FARRELL: Thank you, Secretary, that would be very helpful.</p>	
F009	Finance	McAllister	Detailed Breakdown – NDIS Estimates Variation 2018-19	<p>Senator McALLISTER: Can I ask this. In the letter that I sent to you, and you have a copy of it, dated 3 April, there were three itemised requests for information. Notwithstanding the answer you've just provided, can you please take on notice my request that you provide a response to items 1 and 2 in writing to me, and that that be expedited given the unusual timing of this estimates hearing.</p> <p>Ms Huxtable: I can take that on notice, but I do note in respect of, I think, item 1, we did go through in some detail that there are 4,500 adjustments over 600 programs.</p> <p>Senator McALLISTER: That is true.</p> <p>Ms Huxtable: It is really not feasible to provide that level of detail, and I thought that the discussion we had in respect of that did go through virtually the—</p> <p>Senator McALLISTER: Mr Fredericks did provide some high-level elements which were of great assistance—that is correct.</p> <p>Ms Huxtable: I think it added up to \$28 billion, and there are a very large number of adjustments that are very minor amounts. I can certainly look at what we can provide on notice, but I just don't want to mislead you—</p> <p>Senator McALLISTER: You're taking it on notice and I understand—</p> <p>Ms Huxtable: into thinking that we can provide 4,500 adjustment bits of data, which is not a matter that any government has ever provided. But certainly I can look at that.</p>	Proof Hansard, 4 April 2019, pages 102–103
F010	AEC	Waters	Informal Votes	<p>Senator WATERS: You said last election was the first time that deliberately informal votes exceeded accidentally formal votes.</p> <p>Mr Rogers: That's what our assessment is.</p> <p>Senator WATERS: Did you have a split?</p> <p>Mr Rogers: I'll have to take that one on notice. I don't have that with me, but we do have those figures.</p>	Proof Hansard, 4 April 2019, page 120
F011	Finance	Wong	Dividend Forward Estimates	<p>Senator WONG: ... Ms Hall, you're getting information about the disaggregation of the dividend assumed in the comprehensive income statement over the forward estimates and seeing whether you can provide me that?</p> <p>Ms Hall: Yes</p> <p>...</p> <p>Senator WONG: I know. But, because you don't disaggregate in the budget papers, you have to go back to that, don't you?</p> <p>Senator Cormann: You never used to disaggregate in the budget papers either. In order to be helpful: I have sought advice, and we haven't previously been asked to disaggregate. There is commercial sensitivity in terms of the forward projections. What I suggest we do is take the question on notice with a view to providing you with as much information as we can without harming the public interest.</p>	Proof Hansard, 9 April 2019, pages 6, 7
F012	Finance	Wong	Funding: Life-of-Type and Fully Cycle Dockings	<p>Senator WONG: That's fine. Does this include subs plus something else?</p> <p>Mr Whiley: Yes, everything else.</p> <p>Senator WONG: Are you able to tell me how much you get for subs? Is it in the corporate plan? It might be in the corporate plan. It might be in the annual report.</p> <p>Mr Whiley: I don't think we've got it here.</p> <p>Senator Cormann: Why don't I take the same approach and say that we will be as helpful as we can be on notice, bearing in mind that we don't want to put information out into the public domain that would harm the public interest.</p>	Proof Hansard, 9 April 2019, page 12
F013	ASC Pty Ltd	Wong	Payments	<p>Senator WONG: Do you know how much more they're going to have to pay you?</p> <p>Mr Whiley: No.</p> <p>Senator WONG: But it will be more? I mean, life-of-type extension is—</p> <p>Mr Whiley: The design work is going to be extra and there will be some premium inside the maintenance activities, yes.</p> <p>Senator WONG: And presumably implementation is additional work?</p> <p>Mr Whiley: Yes, but there'll be a decrease in some costs because we won't be doing some maintenance because we're replacing some.</p> <p>Senator WONG: Has there been discussion about the cost of this?</p> <p>Mr Whiley: We've done some preliminary work, which we provided to CASG.</p> <p>Senator WONG: This is what defence procurement is called now—CASG?</p> <p>...</p>	Proof Hansard, 9 April 2019, page 12

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				<p>Mr Whiley: It's probably best to ask Defence those types of questions.</p> <p>Senator WONG: Well, you did them.</p> <p>Mr Whiley: Yes, I know, but it was done some time ago and I haven't got it in front of me, so I—</p> <p>Senator WONG: Are we talking hundreds of millions?</p> <p>Mr Whiley: I think you really have to ask Defence—</p> <p>Senator WONG: I'm asking you, Mr Whiley.</p> <p>Mr Whiley: I know you are, but I haven't got it in front of me.</p> <p>Senator Cormann: If you want, we can take it on notice. He doesn't have it at his fingertips.</p> <p>Senator WONG: But he knows it in his head—I know this bloke.</p> <p>Senator Cormann: No, he said he doesn't. That's the whole—</p> <p>Senator WONG: He does know it in his head; he knows broadly. There's not much he doesn't know about Collins.</p> <p>Senator Cormann: Sure, he's an amazing guy, which is why we appointed him to the position, but, as we always do in estimates with this sort of question, we want to make sure that the information we provide is accurate. That is why, given the passage of time, we'll take it on notice.</p>	
F014	Finance	Wong	Payments to ASC by the Commonwealth	<p>Senator WONG: So for 2017-18 and 2016-17 how much was paid to ASC by the Commonwealth for the submarines project?</p> <p>Ms Hall: We'll have to get back to you on notice with that one.</p> <p>Senator WONG: Why don't we do it this way? You're taking on notice the forward estimates figures for this, but I'm going to ask about the past. In 2017-18 and 2016-17, how much did the submarines component of ASC's work cost Defence?</p> <p>Ms Hall: We'll have to take that on notice.</p>	Proof Hansard, 9 April 2019, page 18
F015	Finance	Wong	Coordination Access Agreement	<p>Senator WONG: No, no, no. For any failure—the second one is kind of binary; either they can use it or they can't. But, for the first one, obviously there could be questions about whether access was provided, whether something happened. I'm asking: does the coordination access agreement quantify or at least provide a method of quantification for damage and loss resulting from a breach?</p> <p>Mr Knox: It provides a framework under which those discussions would take place, should that happen.</p> <p>Senator WONG: Is there any number mentioned? Is there an upper limit on the risk to the taxpayers?</p> <p>Mr Jagers: There is an upper limit in the deed, but it hasn't been disclosed in the statement of risk, for commercial reasons.</p> <p>Senator WONG: I'm asking you what it is.</p> <p>Senator Cormann: For commercial reasons—I will give the same qualifier—we'll take it on notice to see whether we can assist you in a way that doesn't harm the public interest.</p>	Proof Hansard, 9 April 2019, page 21
F016	Finance	Wong	Negotiation of the Deeds	<p>Senator WONG: Sure. I understand these are negotiations between the Defence portfolio and Naval Group in its various forms, but the sort of prudence associated with exposing taxpayers to a guarantee is something Finance would usually provide advice on. Were you asked to provide advice on this?</p> <p>Ms Hall: Yes, we were.</p> <p>Senator WONG: When were you asked to provide advice, Ms Hall?</p> <p>Ms Hall: We were involved and working with the Department of Defence from about July last year, July 2018, up until the conclusion of negotiations in January-February 2019.</p> <p>Senator WONG: Did Defence want a higher level of guarantee than Finance was prepared to agree to?</p> <p>Ms Hall: I'd have to take that detail on notice.</p>	Proof Hansard, 9 April 2019, page 22
F017	Finance	McAllister	Performance of the Future Fund	<p>Senator McALLISTER: In relation to the forecast for 2019-20, what is being assumed about the general trajectory for the Future Fund? I ask because, on that same page, there's an indication that non-taxation receipts are revised downwards. There's an indication that that reflects lower than expected state and territory contributions to the NDIS and lower than expected receipts from the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, but it's silent about the performance of the Future Fund, and I'm really just trying to understand where it's going.</p> <p>Senator Cormann: That's a fair question, and I think you are asking for a disaggregation of that line item. Consistent with our usual practice, what I would say is that we will take that on notice and provide that information for you on notice.</p>	Proof Hansard, 9 April 2019, page 30
F018	Future Fund	McAllister	Organisational Chart	<p>Senator McALLISTER: Do you have an updated organisational chart that you could provide, or is the one on the website up to date?</p> <p>Mr Neal: I'm not completely sure whether we have an organisational chart on the website. I'm certain that we can provide you a chart. Presumably a chart of the senior staff is what you're looking for. We can do that.</p>	Proof Hansard, 9 April 2019, page 31

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F019	CSC	McAllister	Opt-in – Impact on Policies	<p>Senator McALLISTER: I want to go back to the 9,000 members who will need to take positive action to opt into life insurance. What are you projecting in terms of those who will and those who won't?</p> <p>Mr Carrigy-Ryan: I don't know. I don't think you can project that. I don't know the answer to that question. As you know, most of this insurance was done on an opt-out basis. I honestly do not know what people will do. I don't think we have experience in the industry yet of a regime that is, bluntly, the reverse to what it was.</p> <p>Senator McALLISTER: Have you determined the threshold at which a failure of people to opt in will have a material impact on the policies of the remaining participants in that life insurance scheme?</p> <p>Mr Carrigy-Ryan: I haven't got the statistics with me. Certainly the industry has done that and the underwriters have done that—AIA and every other participant in that business. I don't have those numbers with me, but I can certainly get them and provide them. That information has been made public, though—the impact that different changes to insurance might have on the premium pool that's received. I can get those numbers for you. I don't have them with me.</p> <p>Senator McALLISTER: I'm really trying to understand how the CSC is thinking about it as a specific business challenge rather than an industry-level challenge. There were a range of representations made to me and, I'm sure, lots of other colleagues about the significance of those changes to life insurance. I'm trying to understand how your organisation is dealing with that challenge.</p> <p>Mr Carrigy-Ryan: In a sense, being part of the premium pool, if you will, our group insurer for PSSap is AIA, which has, obviously, a large number of superannuation funds that are—</p> <p>Senator McALLISTER: Signed up.</p> <p>Mr Carrigy-Ryan: signed up to it. Our member base has a particular set of differences compared to some other funds in terms of claims history, in terms of risk and those sorts of things. As you would expect, every industry has a different characterisation, if you will. I suppose one of the things that we're thinking about is where it is appropriate, and in what sorts of occupations that we might have, because we cover a large range of occupations. It might be appropriate to suggest to people that they might want to think about staying insured and the impact that it might have on them over the longer term if they were, for example, wanting to re-enter that in future years. It's very difficult to project, but I don't think generally our response would be different to a number of industries, with the exception that there are a number of specifics, like emergency workers and perhaps building workers, where there may well be a different set of considerations that would apply.</p> <p>Senator McALLISTER: Which part of your membership would you identify as being particularly affected, thinking about the public sector workers?</p> <p>Mr Carrigy-Ryan: An example of that is the AFP.</p>	Proof Hansard, 9 April 2019, page 37
F020	Finance	Wong	Campaigns Not Subject of Budget Measure	<p>Senator WONG: Right. Can you go back to my question, though. I don't understand the answer. You've given me 15 campaigns to date. You don't want to give me the authorised figure, because you say you don't have it, and you're not giving me any further expenditure to date. But I'm asking which of them have not been the subject of a budget measure.</p> <p>Dr Helgeby: Of the 15?</p> <p>Senator WONG: Yes. We've had a MYEFO and a budget in the same period you've had 15 campaigns authorised. Have I misunderstood that?</p> <p>Dr Helgeby: No.</p> <p>Senator WONG: That's correct? So for Defence Force recruitment there's no budget measure, because they keep doing it.</p> <p>Dr Helgeby: Yes. That one stands out in that group. I would have to take on notice exactly which ones, because there are a number. As I said, there are a number in the Health portfolio. There are about five of them in the Health portfolio.</p> <p>Senator WONG: Can you come back today on that?</p> <p>Dr Helgeby: We will endeavour to do that quickly.</p> <p>Senator WONG: Thank you, or you could do it the other way around: which ones have been? I don't mind which of them.</p> <p>Dr Helgeby: Yes.</p>	Proof Hansard, 9 April 2019, page 47
F021	Finance	McAllister	Increase in Staff Allocated to Ministers	<p>Senator McALLISTER: There are offs and ons, but there's also the net effect of that within a constraint that the government imposes on itself and I'm trying to understand whether they have breached that constraint in the period since 1 April, when this document was prepared. You've taken that on notice. Is it possible to get back to us this afternoon?</p> <p>Mr De Silva: I think we can. The total number is 452. It was 452 on 1 February and it was 452 on 1 April.</p> <p>Senator McALLISTER: That's the total number across all government pool positions?</p> <p>Mr De Silva: Yes, across all.</p> <p>Senator McALLISTER: So the pool position number is 452?</p> <p>Mr De Silva: Yes.</p> <p>Senator McALLISTER: It would be good to know, over the course of this afternoon, whether that has changed since 1 April. In the same vein, could I ask whether the total number of staff allocated to the presiding officers has changed since 1 April.</p> <p>Mr De Silva: If I can just go back to your first question, the total number is 452. The number split between parliamentary secretaries and ministers has changed. For ministers it's 408 now and it was 406. For parliamentary secretaries it's 22 and it was 24.</p> <p>Ms Huxtable: Sorry, just to clarify, because I'm not sure that's quite the question you're asking. You're talking about between February and April?</p>	Proof Hansard, 9 April 2019, page 52, 53

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				<p>Mr De Silva: 1 February to 1 April? Ms Huxtable: Senator McAllister is asking from 1 April to— Senator McALLISTER: To now. Ms Huxtable: What day is it today? To 9 April. I think we'll definitely need to take that on notice because we just have to have another discussion. 1 April was last Monday. I'm not sure that we have the sort of real-time data. I'd be very surprised if we have anything that's changed since 1 April, but we can have a separate discussion with some of the other officers to see if there's anything at all.</p>	
F022	Finance	McAllister	Process for Approving Additional Staff	<p>Senator McALLISTER: What would be the process for approving additional staff? Who would be responsible for authorising that, minister? Senator Seselja: I'll ask one of the officials. Ms Huxtable: Finance collates this information and administers payments to staff and the like, but the actual decisions around the allocation of staff are not a matter for Finance. Senator McALLISTER: Who are they a matter for? Mr De Silva: It's a matter for the PM. Ms Huxtable: For the Prime Minister. Senator McALLISTER: Senator Seselja, do you think you could find out whether or not Department of Finance has an accurate record of the decisions taken by the Prime Minister? Senator Seselja: I will do my best. I am advised that there's been no change since 1 April. That's no net increases, so there may be changes, I don't have the details of that.</p>	Proof Hansard, 9 April 2019, page 53
F023	Finance	Farrell	Payments Above the Band	<p>Senator FARRELL: My thinking was that these people were people who were being paid totally above all of the available bands but, in fact, that doesn't appear to be the case. Are you able to break that figure of 42 down and tell me how many people are in a particular band category but are been paid still within the structure, simply at a higher rate, vis-a-vis those people who are actually getting a payment above the total rate? Do you get the point I'm trying to make? Ms Jones: I think I understand what you thought that it was. Of those 42, it's not that they are all, sort of, at this very upper limit that's above the total band; it's that they are paid above the top salary rate of that position. It could be at various increments above the top band of an advisor position, for example. We'd need to take it on notice to look at the request that you've made— Senator FARRELL: But you could provide that information without compromising any of your concerns about— Ms Jones: We'll take that on notice.</p>	Proof Hansard, 9 April 2019, page 54
F024	Finance	Ciccione	Allegations: Karen Andrews	<p>Senator CICCONE: ... There have obviously been allegations over the last 12 months that a minister of the government—it was Minister Karen Andrews—had allegedly thrown an object at one of her staff last year. Is Finance aware of these allegations? Ms Jones: Can we take that on notice, in terms of any formal complaint that's been made to us? I don't have any information on that here with me today. I'd need to check on that. Senator CICCONE: The matter was, from what I understand, raised in the Education and Employment Committee earlier this year, so I'd be surprised that you wouldn't be aware of any allegations to date. Are you not sure that a complaint has been made? Ms Jones: No. I would need to check whether the department has received any complaint. As to whether another department has received a complaint, I can't speak to that. I'd need to take on notice to check on whether the Department of Finance has received a complaint. Senator CICCONE: So you're not sure whether a staff member or the minister has actually contacted the department for advice in relation to an incident? Ms Jones: I'm not personally aware. I would need to check that. ... Senator CICCONE: What actions, if any, have been taken to investigate this matter, if there is a matter that you can or can't confirm? Ms Jones: I'm happy to take that on notice—obviously subject to the first inquiry: have we received a formal complaint? Senator CICCONE: You also have to take on notice whether an investigation has taken place? Ms Jones: Yes, Senator. Senator CICCONE: Has the Special Minister of State been informed of an incident relating to Minister Andrews? Ms Jones: We would need to take that on notice.</p>	Proof Hansard, 9 April 2019, page 55, 56
F025	Finance	Paterson	Acceptance of Comcare Claims – Parliamentarians and Staff	<p>CHAIR: ... I want to follow up a question on notice from the last round of estimates in February. It is F039. ... CHAIR: So there have been three upheld compensation claims; correct? Mr De Silva: There were three compensation claims. There was one compensation claim against one parliamentarian and there were two compensation claims against another. I'd need to take on notice what the outcome of those were. CHAIR: My impression, if my memory is correct, is that we were only talking about the successful compensation claims. I briefly pursued this with Comcare last week in another committee and that seemed to be the understanding, but I don't want to verbal them. I can pursue it with them again later this</p>	Proof Hansard, 9 April 2019, page 56, 57

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				<p>week, if necessary. Of this parliamentarian who has had two compensation claims made against them, whether or not they were upheld or not, my understanding from Senator Marshall's questions is that he was trying to establish how many complaints had been made against that parliamentarian. Could you clarify of the seven formal complaints made against any parliamentarian—that particular parliamentarian had two compensation claims made against them—how many formal complaints were made against that parliamentarian?</p> <p>Mr De Silva: I'd most likely have to take that on notice. I don't think I've got that breakdown of information here.</p> <p>CHAIR: I think we all know who the parliamentarian is, without naming them—you included, Mr De Silva. It shouldn't be at all difficult, given this has been an issue pursued in this committee over multiple rounds of estimates, to have that information?</p> <p>Mr De Silva: As I said, I will take it on notice.</p>	
F026	Finance	Farrell	Government Staffing Arrangements	<p>Senator FARRELL: Then perhaps I can ask the minister. Can you tell us how the government staffing arrangements are made?</p> <p>Senator Seselja: No, I can't. As indicated, it's a matter for the Prime Minister's office, so it's not something I have direct knowledge of or, indeed, in my representing capacity, have responsibility for today.</p> <p>Senator FARRELL: You are representing the Special Minister of State, and the Special Minister of State has no role in the government staffing committee?</p> <p>Senator Seselja: Not to my knowledge. I can take it on notice, but I would assume it would be something out of the Prime Minister's office.</p> <p>...</p> <p>Senator FARRELL: I have some additional questions that you might be able to assist us with if you're going to go down that track. My first question is: can you tell us the current make-up of the Government Staffing Committee? My second question is: when were changes last made to the make-up of that committee? My third question is: when was the last time that this committee met? My next question is: are there any meetings scheduled in the next six weeks? My final question is: can staffing appointments be made without going through that committee?</p> <p>Senator Seselja: I'll take all of those on notice.</p>	Proof Hansard, 9 April 2019, page 57, 58, 59
F027	IPEA	Hume	Employment Former AFP Officer	<p>Senator HUME: ... In your evidence in estimates in February, I noted that you said you'd employed a former AFP officer to help with your investigations and audits of expenses. I'm wondering whether that particular AFP officer, now employed by IPEA, has had any previous involvement with the investigation into F&M Printing because, obviously, that would align nicely?</p> <p>Ms Godwin: I'm reluctant to answer a question about what an officer's done in a previous agency, particularly in that agency. I wouldn't want to breach any—I don't know what their privacy, security or information-sharing arrangements are, so I am reluctant to answer that particular part of the question. I could of course take that question on notice, but I would need to liaise with the other agency about that and I cannot guarantee where they will land on that particular process.</p> <p>Senator HUME: Is the agent in the room?</p> <p>Ms Godwin: I don't know, Senator.</p> <p>Senator HUME: I'm just wondering whether we could ask him, if it's appropriate—or her; I should've said.</p> <p>Ms Godwin: Sorry, I was just distracted there for a moment.</p> <p>Senator HUME: I'm just wondering if we ask the agent directly—the former AFP member—if they're in the room, whether they have had any investigations in the past in their former role and anything to do with investigating F&M Printing.</p> <p>Ms Godwin: Again, I would be reluctant to answer that question on the grounds that it's to do with that person's engagement in a former agency. That former agency happens to have a whole range of particular security and privacy related issues, and I would want to discuss that with that agency so that we were not breaching any arrangements that they might've had in place.</p> <p>Senator HUME: The reason I ask is that the evidence you gave in February was that the particular former AFP officer had worked on multiple cases and that was why his skill set was so valuable for the role, and you did offer those details last time round.</p> <p>Ms Godwin: They were generic details; they were not specific to any one particular case or one particular situation.</p> <p>CHAIR: Being cognisant of the case that you raise, Ms Godwin, perhaps Senator Hume could place these questions on notice for you—</p> <p>Ms Godwin: I'm happy to do that.</p>	Proof Hansard, 9 April 2019, page 67
F028	IPEA	Patrick	Preliminary Assessments - Staffers	<p>Senator PATRICK: I don't intend to go to the identities, but how many preliminary assessments have you done on staffers?</p> <p>Ms Godwin: I may need to take that on notice. I'm just checking whether my colleague has got the specific detail.</p> <p>Ms Gartmann: Senator, I'm afraid we haven't broken it down into the assessments between members of parliament and staff in the briefing we have got here, but we would be very happy to take it on notice and come back to you.</p>	Proof Hansard, 9 April 2019, page 70

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F029	IPEA	Patrick	Assurance Review - Staffers	<p>Senator PATRICK: ... The next question I was going to ask was 'How many staffers have been through an assurance review?', because I think it would be quite interesting to see that there would clearly be quite a difference in those numbers as well.</p> <p>...</p> <p>Ms Godwin: We actually had a question on notice previously, so I can give you an update from that. This was question on notice No. 42 for—</p> <p>Senator PATRICK: From which senator?</p> <p>Ms Godwin: It was Senator Waters on 26 February 2019. I'll just read the questions out and give you the answers, if that makes it easier.</p> <p>...</p> <p>Senator PATRICK: Okay. Maybe I'll just reframe my question on notice to say: can you please update Senator Waters' question?</p> <p>Ms Godwin: Sure.</p>	Proof Hansard, 9 April 2019, pages 70, 71
F030	AEC	Hume	GetUp	<p>Mr Pirani: The allegation that had been put to us was that GetUp as an associated entity of the Greens and the Australian Labor Party.</p> <p>Senator HUME: And that was the preliminary view that the AEC conveyed to GetUp?</p> <p>Mr Pirani: No. I'd need to take on notice whether that was specifically in the letter, but certainly we indicated in the letter to afford GetUp natural justice that we had formed a preliminary view that there was some prima facie material and sought their response to that.</p>	Proof Hansard, 9 April 2019, page 75
F031	AEC	Farrell	Staffing	<p>Senator FARRELL: Thank you, Commissioner. How many staff do you currently have? Perhaps some of these I'll read through and, rather than answer them now, you can take them on notice. If you're happy to get them back to me in good time, that solves my problem and allows us to continue with the program. How many staff do you currently have employed by the commission, including part-time and temporary staff? How many more will be required by the end of the campaign period or to run operations on polling day and the count itself? How does this compare, for example, with 2017, when no election was due for quite some time? In terms of the cost to the commission, can you explain to the committee the processes of contracting staff, given the date of the actual election is still unknown? That is to say, are staff still contracted until the last possible date or placed on temporary contracts? Given the belief by most commentators, based on the advice of the commission, that the last possible date is 18 May—and I note your comments today—were the AEC contracting based on this advice? Have contracts or staffing resources been amended to reflect the refusal by the Prime Minister to call an election and the possibility of 25 May? Given your knowledge of the process of conducting an election, how would a fixed parliamentary term benefit the commission? Would it save the commission money? How would it allow you—</p> <p>Mr Rogers: To be controversial, I'm happy to answer that one.</p> <p>Senator FARRELL: Sure.</p> <p>Mr Rogers: We'd absolutely save money.</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Senator FARRELL: Good. On the same issue of fixed parliamentary terms, how would it save money? Would it allow you to amend your training and staff processes? If you so wish to comment, would you believe it's a beneficial change? They're all the questions on staffing and so forth.</p> <p>Mr Rogers: I'm happy to take all those on notice.</p>	Proof Hansard, 9 April 2019, pages 79-80
F032	AEC	Farrell	Social Media	<p>Senator FARRELL: I've just got a couple of questions about social media. How many actions has the AEC taken against authorised entities or entities which ought to be authorised in the 2017-18 and 2018-19 years for publishing electoral material without authorisation? You may wish to take that on notice.</p> <p>Mr Rogers: In the interests of accuracy, we might take that on notice.</p>	Proof Hansard, 9 April 2019, page 80
F033	Finance	McAllister	Climate Solutions Package	<p>Senator McALLISTER: I see. On page 73 of BP 2, the Climate Solutions Package is set out. Can I just confirm that the net spending—the actual expenditure—is \$317 million of expenses, including the current financial year?</p> <p>Senator Cormann: What is the question?</p> <p>Senator McALLISTER: I'm trying to confirm the numbers, because the measure sets out some expenditure in the current financial year. I'm just trying to check what the total expenses are associated with the program.</p> <p>Senator Cormann: Over 15 years from 2018-19, it's \$3.5 billion. So obviously 15 years goes beyond the period of the current forward estimates into the medium term and beyond. The expenses over the forward estimates are as indicated.</p> <p>Senator McALLISTER: Right. Okay.</p> <p>Senator Cormann: I should rephrase: the additional funding allocated in this budget over the forward estimates are as indicated in this table, because, of course, there was previous funding already in the budget bottom line.</p> <p>Senator McALLISTER: Are you in a position to provide the previously provisioned funding in the budget bottom line—</p> <p>Senator Cormann: I'm happy to provide that on notice.</p> <p>Senator McALLISTER: over the forwards?</p> <p>Senator Cormann: I'm happy to provide that on notice.</p>	Proof Hansard, 9 April 2019, pages 86

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F034	Finance	McAllister	Additional Resources to Shareholder Departments: Snowy 2.0	<p>Senator McALLISTER: ... Were previous additional resources provided to those departments for that?</p> <p>Ms Huxtable: We might have to take on notice the specific—</p> <p>Senator Cormann: There was some, but—</p> <p>Unidentified speaker: It was relatively minor.</p> <p>Senator Cormann: This is not a big sum.</p> <p>Senator McALLISTER: No. It's not. I'm just trying to get clarity around how the measure works. It's not a big 'gotcha' question. I'm just trying to understand.</p> <p>Senator Cormann: We'll get it for you, but it wouldn't be a large number—if there was.</p> <p>Senator McALLISTER: Right.</p>	Proof Hansard, 9 April 2019, page 87
F035	Finance	McAllister	Equity Injection: Snowy 2.0	<p>CHAIR: Minister, I understand in the environment and communications committee this week, the CEO of Snowy 2.0, Mr Paul Broad, said that Snowy Hydro did not ask the government for a \$1.38 billion equity injection. Is that correct?</p> <p>Senator Cormann: That's not correct. I've got in front of me the letter from the chairman of Snowy Hydro, Noel Cornish, dated 21 November 2018, essentially putting the business case for Snowy 2.0 and the project's business case. Relevantly, what it says is: 'The board's ability to reach final investment decision'—that is, for the project to go ahead, 'is ultimately subject to shareholder approvals and a series of commitments', which were being sought from the Commonwealth, and one of the commitments sought from the Commonwealth by the board of Snowy Hydro—and I'm quoting from the letter—was: 'a legally-binding equity subscription deed. This is required to be executed at a final investment decision confirming the Commonwealth's commitment to an equity subscription of \$1.38 billion to be paid between financial year 2019 and financial year 2023. This is critical to enable the project to be delivered without jeopardising the company's investment grade credit rating.'</p> <p>Then further down in the same letter: 'The board requests that the Commonwealth, as shareholder, provides the formal approvals and commitments sought to enable us to reach final investment decision on 12 December 2018.' Self-evidently, the project was only going to happen if the board signed off on the final investment decision. The advice from the board of Snowy Hydro to the Commonwealth was that, in order to be able to make a final investment decision, a legally binding equity subscription deed was required, with a Commonwealth commitment to an equity subscription of \$1.38 billion, which is consistent with the statements I've made at various times on the public record.</p> <p>CHAIR: Thank you for the clarification.</p> <p>Senator McALLISTER: You are going to table the letter?</p> <p>Senator Cormann: I'm happy to take on notice to what extent it can be tabled.</p>	Proof Hansard, 9 April 2019, page 87
F036	Finance	McAllister	'Supporting Our Hospitals, Community Health and Hospitals Program'	<p>Senator McALLISTER: ... I'm referring to 'Supporting our hospitals, community health and hospitals program'. Is it simply the transfer of expenses from Health to Treasury? Is that all that has changed about this measure?</p> <p>...</p> <p>Senator McALLISTER: I'm trying to understand why it's a measure at all and what is new about either the table or the text? Is it the case that the only change to this measure is the transfer of the expenses from Health to Treasury?</p> <p>Mr Fredericks: We'll just get some advice on the treatment as between Treasury and Health. I suspect that's something to do with an NPA, but, in fairness, this is the first time this measure has been announced. So, whilst it was provisioned in a previous MYEFO, you see here in the measure itself the articulation of the purposes of the program and expenditure of it. So, in a sense, it's government fulfilling its obligation to set out in a measure, at the first available opportunity, that which was previously provisioned. Actually, my colleague has raised an important point. The paragraph at the very end on page 108 says:</p> <p>This measure builds on the 2017-18 Budget measure titled <i>National Health Funding Body — funding requirements</i>. So there had been a previous measure, but obviously, sometimes that announcement is taken further and more detail is provided at a subsequent economic update, and we transparently identify that.</p> <p>Senator McALLISTER: That's what I'm really trying to get to the bottom of: what has actually changed? It was announced in MYEFO. There's \$1.3 billion over seven years to 2018-19 in the community health and hospitals program. How much of that is to be expended in the forward estimates?</p> <p>Mr Fredericks: If you just look at the opening sentence of the measure, the \$1.3 billion has been provided over seven years from 2018-19, so the measure itself is a seven-year measure—</p> <p>Senator McALLISTER: Starting this year?</p> <p>Mr Fredericks: I don't have the detail as to how much of that is provisioned over the forward estimates.</p> <p>Senator McALLISTER: Can we get that?</p> <p>Ms Huxtable: We could take it on notice.</p> <p>Mr Fredericks: I think I might have to take that on notice.</p> <p>Senator McALLISTER: It's a fairly significant element of the government's budget discussion, Minister. Can you just tell us how much of this actually gets spent? You may not have been listening. My exchange—</p> <p>Senator Cormann: I was listening. What is your question? How much of it is going to be spent? That is reported.</p> <p>Senator McALLISTER: It's not. There is a figure of \$1.3 billion over seven years from 2018-19. I'm trying to understand, in the current year and in each</p>	Proof Hansard, 9 April 2019, pages 93, 94

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				year of the forwards— Senator Cormann: We will provide that on notice.	
F037	Finance	McAllister	Historical Average Payments Growth	Senator McALLISTER: What's the historical average payments growth level? Ms Huxtable: I think payments growth is all set out in one of these tables in the back of the budget papers. We'll just get it. It's table 1 on page 10-5. If you look at page 10-5 there's 'payments real growth', which sets out the year-on-year growth. In terms of then calculating that growth over different time periods, we'd probably have to take that on notice, depending on the particular time period that you were after.	Proof Hansard, 9 April 2019, page 94
F038	Finance	McAllister	Women on Boards in the Portfolio	Senator McALLISTER: What's the proportion of women on boards in the portfolio? Senator Cormann: We'll find that for you. We might have to take that on notice. But we do report that on a semi-regular basis through the government process.	Proof Hansard, 9 April 2019, page 98
F039	Finance	McAllister	Solar Thermal Power Plant, Port Augusta	Senator McALLISTER: Okay. Minister, I wanted to ask you about the solar thermal power plant at Port Augusta. There are media reports from Friday that the project will not go ahead. You've obviously been the owner of the arrangements with— Senator Cormann: No, I haven't been the owner; that's not quite right. Senator McALLISTER: Well, you've been the owner of the arrangements in the Senate with former Senator Xenophon and the Nick Xenophon Team. You said: ... in the lead-up to the last election, the coalition made a commitment to deliver a solar thermal plant in Port Augusta. When did you find out that the project in Port Augusta was in trouble? Senator Cormann: We made a particular commitment in relation to an equity contribution or concessional loan, whatever worked best for the company, which was identified by the then South Australian state Labor government, the Weatherill government. The Weatherill government decided the proponent for the project. Our commitment was consistent with what was publicly announced at the time and it's been available all the way through, but the company that was selected by the state Labor government ultimately made a decision that the project wasn't financially viable for it, despite the Commonwealth's contribution that was available in the form as publically announced. When did I first become aware, finally, that it had decided not to proceed or that it wasn't able to proceed on those terms? That was when the story appeared in the media. I should say that, at various times, I have had approaches from the company to discuss the offer available from the Commonwealth to provide the appropriate equity or concessional loan support which was available, and the company well understood where the Commonwealth was at in relation to that. Senator McALLISTER: On what occasions did you meet with them? Senator Cormann: I'll have to take that on notice. The last meeting would have been some time ago.	Proof Hansard, 9 April 2019, page 99
F040	Finance	McAllister	Transparency Portal	Senator McALLISTER: ... You have a new transparency portal: transparency.gov.au. Senator Cormann: Indeed we do, and it is a very prized project— ... Ms Huxtable: We have developed the portal ourselves from within our own resources. Senator McALLISTER: So, no additional resources. Did it have a budget though? Ms Huxtable: The officers may help me with that. I expect it was a modest amount, however. Dr Helgeby: It would have had a very modest budget. Ms Huxtable: We might have to take that on notice. We don't actually have that figure. It's so modest it's not in the brief.	Proof Hansard, 9 April 2019, page 100
F041	Finance	Patrick	Whole of Australian Government Travel	1. What was the total cost for the Whole of Australian Government Travel in FY 2018-19. 2. Can a breakdown be provided as to the total cost for the Whole of Australian Government Travel in FY 2018-19 for: a. domestic air services travel, including: i. total cost of bookings for flights operated by Qantas; ii. total cost of bookings for flights operated by Virgin; iii. total cost of bookings for flights operated by others; iv. total number of bookings for flights operated by Qantas; v. total number of bookings for flights operated by Virgin; and vi. total number of bookings for flights operated by others; b. international air services travel;	Written

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				c. travel management services; d. accommodation program management services; e. travel and card-related services; f. car rental services; and g. other.	
F042	Finance	Patrick	Non-Corporate Commonwealth Entity Travel	1. What was the total cost of travel for each Non-Corporate Commonwealth Entity in FY 2018-19. 2. Can a breakdown be provided as to the total cost of travel for each Non-Corporate Commonwealth Entity in FY 2018-19 for: a. domestic air services travel; i. total cost of bookings for flights operated by Qantas; ii. total cost of bookings for flights operated by Virgin; iii. total cost of bookings for flights operated by others; iv. total number of bookings for flights operated by Qantas; v. total number of bookings for flights operated by Virgin; and vi. total number of bookings for flights operated by others; b. international air services travel; c. travel management services; d. accommodation program management services; e. travel and card-related services; and f. car rental services.	Written
F043	AEC	Storer	Donations	a) Is there any requirement for multiple political donations under \$13,800 to the one political party to be aggregated for the purpose of determining whether the donation disclosure threshold has been reached? b) If a company was to make a donation to political party of \$13,799 every day for a year, would the public disclosure requirement be triggered? c) If a company was to make separate donations of \$13,799 to the Liberal National Party of Queensland, Liberal Party of Australia, National Party of Australia, Country Liberal Party on the same day, would the public disclosure requirement be triggered? d) If a company was to make separate donations of \$13,799 to the Liberal National Party of Queensland, Liberal Party of Australia, National Party of Australia, Country Liberal Party every day for a year, would the public disclosure requirement be triggered?	Written