

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

ADDITIONAL BUDGET ESTIMATES - 14 FEBRUARY 2013 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Human Services Portfolio

Topic: Briefing for the Australian Greens and Independents

Question reference number: HS 68

Senator: Boyce

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 5 April 2013

Number of pages: 2

Question:

- a) Have any briefings been provided to the Australian Greens? If yes, please include:
 - 1) How are briefings requests commissioned?
 - 2) What briefings have been undertaken? Provide details and a copy of each briefing.
 - 3) Have any briefings request been unable to proceed? If yes, provided details of what the briefings were and why it could not proceed.
 - 4) How long is spent undertaking briefings for the Australian Greens? How many staff are involved and how many hours? Provide a breakdown for each employment classification.
- b) Have any briefings been provided to Independents? If yes, please include:
 - 1) How are briefings requests commissioned?
 - 2) What briefings have been undertaken? Provide details and a copy of each briefing.
 - 3) Have any briefings request been unable to proceed? If yes, provided details of what the briefings were and why it could not proceed.
 - 4) How long is spent undertaking briefings for the Independents? How many staff are involved and how many hours? Provide a breakdown for each employment classification.
 - 5) Which Independents have requested briefings and/or information?

Answer:

The following information complements that provided in the answers to Questions on Notice HS 120 and HS 121 arising from the 18 October 2012 Supplementary Estimates hearing.

- a) Yes.
 - 1) Briefing requests can come from Members of Parliament. The Department can also instigate contact with local Members to discuss new initiatives; these may be initiated by local departmental Service Centre Managers or Region Managers.

- 2)
 - i) A verbal briefing was provided to Senator Rachel Siewert on 22 August 2012 in regard to hearing services provided to prisoners, and Australian Hearing's clinical pathways. The briefing was pursuant to questions on Australian Hearing's role in the provision of services to prisoners in the criminal justice system raised by Senator Siewert during the Community Affairs Legislation Committee's Budget Estimates hearing on 29 May 2012. No documents were provided.
 - ii) A briefing was provided to Senator Rachel Siewert on 5 February 2013 in relation to letters sent to people transferring from Parent Payment to Newstart Allowance. No documents were provided.
- 3) No.
- 4)
 - i) The briefing was for approximately 30 minutes. It was provided by the Executive Manager Clinical Practice and the Manager Corporate Governance from Australian Hearing, and an EL2 from the Portfolio Agency Advice Branch of the Department of Human Services. The meeting was also attended by the Chief of Staff and an Advisor from the Minister's Office.
 - ii) The briefing was for approximately 30 minutes. It was provided by the Deputy Secretary Enabling Services. The meeting was also attended by the Deputy Chief of Staff from the Minister's Office.
- b) Yes.
 - 1) Briefing requests can come from Members of Parliament. The Department can also instigate contact with local Members to discuss new initiatives; these may be initiated by local departmental Service Centre Managers or Region Managers.
 - 2) Verbal briefings were provided to the office of Mr Tony Windsor MP (Independent Member for New England) in December 2012 regarding co-location in the new Department of Human Services building in Tamworth and Parenting Payment Grandfathered changes.
 - 3) No.
 - 4) One APS 6 for one hour, and one EL 2 for half an hour.
 - 5) None.