

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO
2015-16 Additional Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: Cross Outcome - Across Programmes Question No: SQ16-000054

Topic: Conditions of Government Contracts and Agreements

Hansard page: Written

Senator Joe Ludwig asked:

1. Do any contracts managed by the Department/Agency contain any limitations or restrictions on advocacy or criticising Government policy? If so, please name each contract. When was it formed or created?
2. What are the specific clauses and/or sections which state this, or in effect, create a limitation or restriction?
3. Do any agreements managed by the Department/Agency contain any limitations on restrictions on advocacy or criticisms of Government policy? If so, please name each agreement. When was it formed or created?
4. What are the specific clauses and/or sections which state this, or in effect, create a limitation or restriction?
5. For each of the contracts and agreements, are there any particular reason, such as genuine commercial in confidence information, for this restriction?
6. Have any changes to financial or resource support to services which advocate on behalf of groups or individuals in Australian society been made? If so, which groups? What was the change?
7. Has any consultation occurred between the Department/Agency and any individuals and/or community groups about these changes? If so, what consultation process was used? Was it public? If not, why not? Are public submissions available on a website?
8. If no consultation has occurred, why not?
9. Did the Minister/Parliamentary Secretary meet with any stakeholders about changes to advocacy in their contracts and/or agreements? If so, when? Who did he/she meet with?

Answer:

- 1-5. The Department does not contractually limit or restrict the not-for-profit sector's freedom to advocate or criticise government policy. This freedom is explicitly set out in the Not-for-profit Sector Freedom to Advocate Act 2013 (the 'Act').
6. Following the 2014-15 Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook, Homelessness Australia, National Shelter Inc and the Community Housing Federation of Australia did not receiving funding after 30 June 2015. This meant agreements terminated 12 months early for both the Community Housing Federation and the National Shelter Inc.
7. The Department regularly meets with organisations about a range of issues relating to our grant programmes. However, no formal consultation has occurred on this issue.
8. See response to Question 7.

9. The Department is not aware of any meetings between the Minister, or Assistant Ministers, with stakeholders to discuss advocacy activities in their grant agreements or contracts.

Please list all other Branches/Offices/Departments Consulted:

1. N/A

	Departmental Officer:		Cleared by:	
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Cleared by Group Manager	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Date: 9/3/16	GM Initial	TR
Cleared by Deputy Secretary	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Date: 9/3/16	DS Initial	BB

Officer who will address this question at the next Estimates	Stacey Pondes
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