

# Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

## BUDGET ESTIMATES - 29 MAY 2012 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

### Human Services Portfolio

**Topic:** Education Expenses

**Question reference number:** HS 84

**Senator:** McKenzie

**Type of question:** Written

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** 27 July 2012

**Number of pages:** 2

#### **Question:**

- a) What are the department/agency's guidelines on study? Please provide details.
- b) For this financial year to date, detail all education expenses (i.e. in house courses and tertiary studies) for each portfolio department and agency. Include what type of course, the total cost, cost per participant, the employment classification of each participant, how many participants and the amount of study leave granted to each participant (provide a breakdown for each employment classification). Also include the reason for the study and how it is beneficial for the department/agency.

#### **Answer:**

- a) Clause H15 of the *Department of Human Services Agreement 2011 – 2014* provides for studies assistance to employees. Studies Assistance guidelines describe the criteria for the Secretary's determination for approved students and the access to various forms of leave for study.
- b) The department's expenditure on education and training for the financial year to date (ie 1 July to 31 May 2012) is \$13,906,396. This amount includes technical and skills based training for the department approximately 36,000 employees. This training is essential to ensure staff can deliver the department's programs effectively. It also includes educational expenses linked to accredited learning and formal study leave. The range of courses offered includes:
  - compliance;
  - collection and debt;
  - customer service;
  - leadership;
  - participation program changes;
  - customer payment training;
  - corporate refresher training;
  - operational and technical training;
  - induction and orientation for new starters;

- public administration management; and
  - disability employment services program.
2. For the financial year to date (i.e. 1 July 2011 to 31 May 2012), staff attended 1,406 courses. Course participation identifies the total number of attendees across all course delivery methods and can include web-based learning, self-paced learning, facilitated and formal classroom training. An employee may have attended more than one course.
  3. The information required to answer the question of cost per participant and employment classification per participant is not readily available. To prepare an answer would require an unreasonable diversion of resources.
  4. A total of 686 employees utilised study leave for a total of 10,342 days. Study leave can include leave with full pay and leave without pay. The amount of study leave granted to a participant can vary and is not readily available. To prepare an answer would require an unreasonable diversion of resources.
  5. Study is beneficial for the department and undertaken for the purpose of equipping staff with the qualifications, knowledge and skills to perform a variety of service delivery, health, social welfare and support roles.