

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

BUDGET ESTIMATES – 5-6 JUNE 2014 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Human Services

Topic: Contracts for Temporary Staff

Question reference number: HS 149

Senator: Ludwig

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 25 July 2014

Number of pages: 2

Question:

- a) How much did the department/agency spend on temporary or contract staff since September 7th 2013?
- b) How many temporary or contract staff were employed since September 7th 2013?
- c) How many temporary or contract staff are currently employed?
- d) How much was paid for agencies/companies to find temporary/contract staff?
- e) How much is budgeted in the 2014/15 year for contract staff?
- f) What policies/criteria govern the appointment of contract staff?
- g) How is the use of contract staff consistent with a professional, independent public service?

Answer:

- a) Between 7 September 2013 and 31 May 2014, the department spent \$10,810,547.81 on contractor engagements through specialist contracting companies.
- b) Between 7 September 2013 and 31 May 2014, the department established 202 new contractor engagements through specialist contracting companies.
- c) As at 31 May 2014, the department had 275 contractors engaged through specialist contracting companies.
- d) The department is not charged fees for the sourcing of contract/temporary staff. The specialist contracting or staff services companies, under panel arrangements established through Open Tender procurements, are paid fixed hourly rates for the services of contract/temporary staff. These rates cover all administration costs for those companies.
- e) There is no separate budgeting allocated for contract or temporary staff. Budgets for business units are determined based on organisational outcomes, and those business units, operating within those budgets, determine the most cost-effective approach to sourcing staffing and/or services to achieve those outcomes.

- f) Decisions on the approach to sourcing staff and/or contractor services are guided by the most cost-effective approach to sourcing staff and/or services to achieve business outcomes weighing up the type of work, the capabilities required and the duration of the tasks. The actual sourcing of contractor services is conducted in accordance with the Commonwealth Procurement Rules.
- g) The department factors in the respective benefits and limitations of all alternative approaches to sourcing staffing and/or services, and thereby ensures professionalism and independence are safeguarded.