

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee
Answers to questions on notice
Environment and Energy portfolio

Question No: 172
Hearing: Additional Estimates
Outcome: Corporate
Program: Corporate Strategies Division (CSD)
Topic: Waste
Hansard Page:
Question Date: 9 March 2017
Question Type: Written

Senator XENOPHON (Finance) and Senator KAKOSCHKE-MOORE (Environment) asked:

Given that government and opposition politicians have all raised concerns over time and had policies on government waste:

1. Is there a central government authority responsible for the elimination of waste?
2. If so:
 - a. Is there a government wide definition on the meaning of 'waste', and if so, what is that definition?
 - b. How does this central government authority monitor and manage waste within the Department?
 - c. Is there a central government mechanism (e.g. phone number, email address, web site) for public servants or contractors to report Departmental waste?
 - d. How much Departmental waste was identified by the central government authority in FY 13/14, FY 14/15 and FY 15/16?
3. If not:
 - a. Is there a departmental definition on the meaning of 'waste', and if so, what is that definition?
 - b. What are the Department's arrangements for monitoring and managing waste?
 - c. Is there a central Departmental mechanism (e.g. phone number, email address, web site) for public servants or contractors to report Departmental waste?
 - d. How much waste was identified by the Department in FY 13/14, FY 14/15 and FY 15/16?
4. In either case:
 - a. Can Departmental officers or contractors report waste anonymously?
 - b. Are they afforded a protection if they do so?

Answer:

1. *Refer to the Department of Finance's response to Additional Senate Estimates Question F128.*
2. *Refer to the Department of Finance's response to Additional Senate Estimates Question F128.*

3.

- a. No – refer to the response against 3b below.
- b. The Department of Environment and Energy (the Department) complies with relevant finance law in the expenditure of monies by procurement or grant.

Finance law includes the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act), the Commonwealth Procurement Rules (CPRs), and the Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines (CGRGs).

- c. Yes. The Department's Workplace Behaviour and Conduct Unit (WBCU) manages the central mechanism under the Public Interest Disclosure (PID) scheme under the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2013*.

Allegations of suspected fraud and corruption can be made in writing (postal or email) or by telephone to the Department's Fraud Liaison Advisor (contact details available upon request).

- d. The Department is not required to monitor or report 'waste'.

4.

- a. Refer to the response against 3c above.
- b. Yes. Under the PID scheme, the Department will offer protection to the Departmental Officers or contractors by protecting their identity and/or protecting them from the risk of reprisal resulting directly from reporting waste.