

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications

Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice

Budget Estimates Hearings May 2014

Communications Portfolio

Department of Communications

Question No: 648

Program No. Corporate

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Reviews

Senator Ludwig asked:

1. Since 25 February 2014, how many new reviews (defined as review, inter-departmental group, inquiry, internal review or similar activity) have been commenced? Please list them including:
 - a. the date they were ordered
 - b. the date they commenced
 - c. the Minister responsible
 - d. the Department responsible
 - e. the nature of the review
 - f. their terms of reference
 - g. the scope of the review
 - h. Whom is conducting the review
 - i. the number of officers, and their classification level, involved in conducting the review
 - j. the expected report date
 - k. the budgeted, projected or expected costs
 - l. If the report will be tabled in parliament or made public

2. For any review commenced or ordered since 25 February 2014, have any external people, companies or contractors being engaged to assist or conduct the review?
 - a. If so, please list them, including their name and/or trading name/s and any known alias or other trading names
 - b. If so, please list their managing director and the board of directors or equivalent
 - c. If yes, for each is the cost associated with their involvement, including a break down for each cost item
 - d. If yes, for each, what is the nature of their involvement
 - e. If yes, for each, are they on the lobbyist register, provide details.
 - f. If yes, for each, what contact has the Minister or their office had with them
 - g. If yes, for each, who selected them
 - h. If yes, for each, did the minister or their office have any involvement in selecting them,
 - i. If yes, please detail what involvement it was
 - ii. If yes, did they see or provided input to a short list
 - iii. If yes, on what dates did this involvement occur
 - iv. If yes, did this involve any verbal discussions with the department
 - v. If yes, on what dates did this involvement occur

3. Since 25 February 2014, what reviews are on-going?
 - a. Please list them.
 - b. What is the current cost to date expended on the reviews?

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4. Since 25 February 2014, have any reviews been stopped, paused or ceased? Please list them.
5. Since 25 February 2014, what reviews have concluded? Please list them.
6. Since 25 February 2014, how many reviews have been provided to Government? Please list them and the date they were provided.
7. When will the Government be responding to the respective reviews that have been completed?
8. What reviews are planned?
 - a. When will each planned review be commenced?
 - b. When will each of these reviews be concluded?
 - c. When will government respond to each review?
 - d. Will the government release each review?
 - i. If so, when?
 - ii. If not, why not?

Answer:

1. No reviews have commenced in the period 25 February 2014 to 30 April 2014.

2. Not applicable.

3a-b.

Ongoing reviews include:

- **Integrated Public Number Database (IPND)** - the cost of this review has been absorbed within the Departmental resourcing.
- **ABC and SBS Efficiency Study** - The cost of the study was met from existing Departmental resources. At 30 April 2014, the cost of the external contractors was \$167,420 (GST inclusive)
- **Digital Radio Reviews - s.215B of the *Broadcasting Services Act 1992* and s.313B of the *Radiocommunications Act 1992*** - the review process is being undertaken as part of the normal business of the Department.
- **Triennial Review of Local Content on Regional Radio** - the review process is being undertaken as part of the normal business of the Department.
- **Independent Audit into Broadband Policy** - \$208,861 (GST inclusive)
- **Cost-Benefit Analysis and Review of Regulation of the NBN** - \$1,027,616. (GST inclusive)
- **Registration on the Do Not Call Register** - the review process is being undertaken as part of the normal business of the Department
- **Consideration, under sections 8J and 8K of the *Telecommunications (Consumer Protection and Service Standards) Act 1998*** - the review process is being undertaken as part of the normal business of the Department

4. Nil

5. No reviews have concluded in the period 25 February to 30 April 2014.

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6. No reviews have been provided to Government in the period 25 February to 30 April 2014.
7. N/A
8. As at 30 April 2014, the following are planned reviews for the Department of Communications:

Review of Spectrum Policy and Regulatory Framework

- a. The review will be announced on 23 May 2014.
- b. The review is expected to report in early 2015.
- c-d. Public release of the report will be at the discretion of the Minister.

Review of the national Triple Zero (000) operator

- a. Expected to commence in July 2014.
- b. Expected to conclude by the first quarter of 2015.
- c. 2015.
- d. Yes – 2015.

Regional Telecommunications Review (RTR)

- a. Not known at this stage.
- b. There is a requirement under the Act for the next RTR to be completed by 23 August 2015.
- c. The Government is required under the Act to respond to the RTR within six months of receiving the report.
- d. The Act requires the Government to release each RTR report within 15 parliamentary sitting days of receiving them.