

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

Question No: 150
Hearing: Budget Estimates
Outcome: Corporate
Programme: Environment Assessment and Compliance Division
Topic: DELEGATION OF APPROVALS
Hansard Page: N/A
Question Date: 10 June 2014
Question Type: Written

Senator Urquhart asked:

ORIGINAL QUESTION:

Can the Department provide the following information with respect to Delegation of Approvals:

- a. Any planned or intended staff redundancies
- b. How many staff will be seconded to state Departments
- c. Timeframe for redundancies and secondments

REVISED QUESTIONS, NOW DIVIDED INTO 3 PARTS (24 JUNE 2014).

Can the Department provide the following information with respect to delegation of approvals under the EPBC Act more generally:

- a) Any planned or intended staff redundancies
- b) How many staff will be seconded to state Departments
- c) Timeframes for redundancies and secondments

Can the Department provide the following information with respect to the One-Stop Shop for environmental approvals:

- a) Any planned or intended staff redundancies
- b) How many staff will be seconded to state Departments
- c) Timeframes for redundancies and secondments

Can the Department provide the following information with respect to the Regulatory Reform Taskforce:

- a) Any planned or intended staff redundancies
- b) How many staff will be seconded to state Departments
- c) Timeframes for redundancies and secondments

ANSWER

The Regulatory Reform Taskforce was set up in October 2013 to progress the accreditation of state and territory assessment and approval processes under the One-Stop Shop election commitment. The taskforce sits within the Environment Assessment and Compliance Division where environmental approvals currently occur under the EPBC Act. Given this context, the information provided below answers all the questions asked on notice.

The Department called for applications for voluntary redundancies 15 April 2014. It is expected that a number of offers will be made by the Department to staff from the Environment Assessment and Compliance Division, in the Regulatory Reform Taskforce.

On 25 June 2014 the Department extended this call for additional applications for voluntary redundancies to COB 30 June 2014. Final numbers will not be known until after the allowable withdrawal date of 31 July 2014.

A commitment has been made by the Commonwealth to provide transitional support to States and Territories in the form of embedded officers, as they transition to the One Stop Shop. This is expected to include embedded officers.

The Division is currently negotiating Bilateral Agreements with all State and Territories, including transitional support that may be available and determining the needs and timing for any embedded officers.

Staff accepting redundancies are expected to leave the Department between July and December 2014.