

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications**  
**Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice**  
**Budget Estimates Hearings May 2015**  
**Communications Portfolio**  
**Special Broadcasting Service**

**Question No: 138(c)**

**Program No. Special Broadcasting Service**

**Hansard Ref: Written, 17/6/2015**

**Topic: Departmental Dispute Resolution**

**Senator Ludwig, Joe asked:**

1. How are disputes between departmental and/or agency staff mediated?
2. Are any outside firms contracted to assist with this process? If yes: please list them, please include:
  - a) The structure of payments made to each firm (e.g. retainers, fees for each consultation etc).
  - b) Amount paid to each firm since the last budget.
  - c) When the contract with the firm commenced.
  - d) When the contract with the firm will expire.
  - e) Why the firm was selected to provide the service.
  - f) Please provide a list of disputes referred to the firm, including a brief description of the dispute.
3. How are code of conduct violations by departmental and/or agency staff mediated?
4. Are any outside firms contracted to assist with this process? If yes: please list them, please include:
  - a) The structure of payments made to each firm (e.g. retainers, fees for each consultation etc).

**Answer**

1. Disputes between the SBS and its staff are generally mediated and internally resolved using the experience and expertise of SBS employees (People and Culture Division) and SBS Legal.

SBS may engage an external mediator to assist with more complex mediations and for legally complex matters that have been referred to the Fair Work Commission.

2. SBS has not currently engaged any external firms to assist with staff mediation.

A to F – not applicable.

3. Code of conduct violations are internally investigated using the expertise of employees within the People and Culture Division and processed through SBS's Informal Discussion, Counselling and Misconduct Process & Procedures.
4. No.

A – not applicable.