

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications

Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice

Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearings November 2014

Communications Portfolio

Department of Communications

Question No: 94

Program 1.1

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Grants

Senator Ludwig, Joe asked:

Since Budget Estimates in June, 2014:

1. What guidelines are in place to administer grants?
2. How are grants applied for?
3. Are there any restrictions on who can apply for a grant? If yes, please detail.
 1. Can these restrictions be waved? If yes, please detail the process for waving them and list any grants where the restrictions were waved.
4. What is the procedure for selecting who will be awarded a grant?
5. Who is involved in this selection process?
6. Does the minister or the minister's office play any role in awarding grants? If yes, please detail.
 1. Has the minister or the minister's office exercised or attempted to exercise any influence over the awarding of any grants? If yes, please detail.
7. Provide a list of all grants, including ad hoc, one-off discretionary grants awarded to date. Provide the recipients, amount, intended use of the grants, what locations have benefited from the grants and the electorate and state of those locations.
8. Update the status of each grant that was approved prior to the specified period, but did not have financial contracts in place at that time. Provide details of the recipients, the amount, the intended use of the grants, what locations have benefited from the grants and the electorate and state of those grants.

Answer:

1. The Department is subject to the following guidelines and obligations in relation to the provision of grants:
 1. The Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines (CGRGs), issued by the Finance Minister under section 105C of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act).
 2. *Implementing Better Practice Grants Administration* issued by the Australian National Audit Office in December 2013.
 3. Programme guidelines developed for individual grant programmes by the Department.
 4. Terms and conditions contained in individual Funding Agreements.
 5. The Department's Accountable Authority Instructions and Practical Guides.
2. Grant programme guidelines issued by the Department include a section on the application process.
3. Yes. Grant programme guidelines issued by the Department include a section on eligible funding recipients.
 1. No.

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- 4&5 Grant programme guidelines issued by the Department include a section on the assessment process and who is involved in this selection process.
6. Potential funding recipients are assessed by the Department and put forward to the Minister as recommendations for approval.
1. No.
7. Since Budget Estimates in June 2014, all grants, discretionary and non-discretionary, made by the Department have been published on the Departmental website at **www.communications.gov.au**
8. The Department does not record grants data in a way that would readily allow this information to be provided. To attempt to provide this information would involve an unreasonable diversion of Departmental resources.