

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Additional Estimates

26 February 2014

Question: AET 1867-1868

Topic: Property Costs (ABS)

Written: 7 March 2014

Senator BUSHBY asked:

1867. What efforts has your department made to shift towards best practice in property leasing to achieve best value for money?
1868. Are you making any efforts yet to reconfigure existing office space to achieve a staff occupancy of 14 sqm or less, and exploring opportunities to sub-let the liberated floor space? If not, why not? What market experts have you engaged on these issues and have they advised you that efficiencies are unable to be achieved?

Answer:

1867. The ABS has reviewed its property portfolio and future requirements against a 14 sqm occupancy rate and where it has been able to identify savings has moved to harness these by listing excess space on the Government Website – Govdex. It has also sought to bring required property operating services under national panel contracts across all its sites so as to realise economies of scale and reduce future procurement overheads.
1868. The ABS is currently reconfiguring tenancies in South Australia and West Australia to achieve staff occupancy ratios below 14sqm in those States. The ABS recently sublet space in South Australia and the ACT, and currently has space in Northern Territory and Tasmania listed on Govdex.

The ABS engaged Colliers International to provide advice on implementing Activity Based Work environments and is trialling this in South Australia and West Australia.