

Senate Economics Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Additional Estimates

2015 - 2016

Department/Agency: ACNC

Question: AET 1009-1017

Topic: Red tape reduction

Reference: written - 19 February 2016

Senator: Ludwig, Joe

Question:

Since the change of Prime Minister on 14 September, 2015:

1009. Please detail changes to structures, officials, offices, units, taskforce or other processes has the department dedicated to meeting the government's red tape reduction targets?

- a) What is the progress of that red tape reduction target
- 1010. How many officers have been placed in those units and at what level?
- 1011. How have they been recruited?
- 1012. What process was used for their appointment?
- 1013. What is the total cost of this unit?
- 1014. What is the estimated total salary cost of the officers assigned to the unit.
- 1015. Do members of the unit have access to cabinet documents?
- 1016. Please list the security classification and date the classification was issued for each officer, broken down by APS or SES level, in the red tape reduction unit or similar body.
- 1017. What is the formal name given to this unit/taskforce/team/workgroup or agency within the department?

Answer:

1009.

The ACNC has been committed since its establishment to red tape reduction and has dedicated resources to this work. This is consistent with the ACNC's statutory object to promote the reduction of unnecessary regulatory obligations on the Australian not-for-profit sector (*s 15-5(1)(c) Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*). No structural changes have been made to the Red Tape Reduction team, which is situated in the Reporting and Red Tape Reduction Directorate, since the change of Prime Minister, however some staffing changes have occurred (see 1010-1012).

a)

For the 2014 deregulation (regulation reform) reporting year, the ACNC contributed \$6.8 million in savings from deregulatory decisions made during the year. For the 2015 reporting year, the ACNC contributed \$8.7 million in savings. The total deregulatory savings across 2014 and 2015 is \$15.5 million.

2015 savings were achieved through:

- Providing a template constitution and guide for use by charitable companies limited by guarantee
- Harmonisation of reporting processes with the Australian Business Register (ABR)

- Non-requirement for financial information from non-government schools, due to alternative financial reporting undertaken by those schools that the ACNC can access from the Department of Education and Training
- Automated password reset for charity portal users
- Exercise of the Commissioner's discretion to accept financial reports lodged with state and territory regulatory agencies as satisfying the ACNC financial reporting requirements for the 2015 reporting year as a transition mechanism

The ACNC continues to work with Commonwealth, state and territory government agencies to implement a 'report once, use often' reporting framework through the Charity Passport. The Charity Passport is a dataset of charity information that is shared with other Australian government agencies to prevent charities from having to provide the same core information multiple times to different agencies.

The ACNC is also working both bilaterally and multilaterally with state and territory government agencies, including the Offices of State Revenue and Consumer Affairs/Fair Trading Offices, in order to identify and implement red tape reduction strategies applicable to the registration and reporting requirements for charities.

1010.

The Red Tape Reduction Team (part of the Reporting and Red Tape Reduction Directorate) consists of:

- Overseen by Director of Reporting and Red Tape Reduction (approximately half time dedicated to red tape reduction)
- 1 x ongoing EL1 Senior Policy Officer
- 1 x ongoing APS6 Policy Analyst (new position, with officer due to commence in March)

1011 – 1012.

The new APS6 Policy Analyst (due to commence in March 2016) was recruited through open (external) recruitment.

The ongoing EL1 Senior Policy Officer position was recruited through open (external) recruitment; however, the officer currently acting in the role is on higher duties secondment from the Australian Taxation Office until the end of the financial year.

The current Acting Director of Reporting and Red Tape Reduction was appointed to act in the position through internal ACNC higher duties. Open (external) recruitment for a permanent officer to fill the role is in progress.

1013 – 1014.

Total cost of the unit and estimated total salary cost:

The total cost (salary cost with oncosts) incurred by the unit between 14 September 2015 and 29th February 2016 was \$48,579. Noting that the APS6 Policy Analyst position was vacant and therefore did not incur any costs. The Director was costed at 50% in line with allotment of time between Reporting and Red Tape Reduction.

The estimated annual salary cost (with oncosts) would be \$176,516 (with all positions filled for a full financial year), with the Director costed at 50% in line with allotment of time between Reporting and Red Tape Reduction.

1015.

The Director (position and current acting officer) has baseline clearance, allowing access to Cabinet documents as necessary.

1016.

EL2.1 (acting) Director: baseline (01/06/2011)

EL1: substantive officer (baseline – 01/06/2011); current acting officer (pre-engagement check – 03/02/2014).

APS6: pre-engagement check (11/02/2016)

1017.

Red Tape Reduction Team in the Reporting and Red Tape Reduction Directorate.