

Senate Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Additional Estimates

2015 - 2016

Department/Agency: ABS

Question: AET 1366-1373

Topic: Reviews

Reference: written - 19 February 2016

Senator: Ludwig, Joe & Wong, Penny

Question:

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

1366. How many new reviews (defined as review, inter-departmental group, inquiry, internal review or similar activity) have been commenced? Please list them including:

- a) the date they were ordered
- b) the date they commenced
- c) the minister responsible
- d) the department responsible
- e) the nature of the review
- f) their terms of reference
- g) the scope of the review
- h) Who is conducting the review
- i) the number of officers, and their classification level, involved in conducting the review
- j) the expected report date
- k) the budgeted, projected or expected costs
- l) If the report will be tabled in parliament or made public

1367. For any review commenced or ordered, have any external people, companies or contractors being engaged to assist or conduct the review?

- a) If so, please list them, including their name and/or trading name/s and any known alias or other trading names
- b) If so, please list their managing director and the board of directors or equivalent
- c) If yes, for each is the cost associated with their involvement, including a break down for each cost item
- d) If yes, for each, what is the nature of their involvement
- e) If yes, for each, are they on the lobbyist register, provide details.
- f) If yes, for each, what contact has the Minister or their office had with them
- g) If yes, for each, who selected them
- h) If yes, for each, did the minister or their office have any involvement in selecting them,
 - 1. If yes, please detail what involvement it was
 - 2. If yes, did they see or provided input to a short list
 - 3. If yes, on what dates did this involvement occur
 - 4. If yes, did this involve any verbal discussions with the department
 - 5. If yes, on what dates did this involvement occur

1368. Which reviews are on-going?

- a) Please list them.
- b) What is the current cost to date expended on the reviews?

1369. Have any reviews been stopped, paused or ceased? Please list them.

1370. Which reviews have concluded? Please list them.

1371. How many reviews have been provided to Government? Please list them and the date they were provided.

1372. When will the Government be responding to the respective reviews that have been completed?

1373. What reviews are planned?

- a) When will each planned review be commenced?
- b) When will each of these reviews be concluded?
- c) When will government respond to each review?
- d) Will the government release each review?

1. If so, when? If not, why not?

Answer:

One review – a peer review – has been commenced by the Population Statistics Branch within the ABS to assist in ensuring the strategy to manage statistical risk within the Post-Enumeration Survey (PES) to be conducted after the 2016 Census is of high quality. The ABS has a very low risk appetite for the PES with the output from this survey being a critical input into the estimation of resident population once the Census counts are received.

1366:

- a) 22 December 2015
- b) 23 February 2016
- c) Assistant Minister Alex Hawke
- d) The Australian Bureau of Statistics
- e) Independent peer review by Statistics NZ to assist in quality assuring the PES strategy
- f) To provide objective input to the PES enumeration strategy, our approach to risk management and our consideration of the key project risks given there have been a number of adjustments required as a consequence of the change in methodology underpinning the 2016 Census.
- g) Joel Watkins, Manager, Vital Statistics Unit, Statistics NZ

- h) SESB1 (0.1 FTE for two days), EL2 (0.67FTE for two days), 2XEL1s (1.75 FTEs for two days), APS6 (0.5FTE for two days), APS5 (0.3FTE for two days) and APS4 (0.33FTE for two days)
- i) 30 March 2016
- j) \$2,000 est expenditure not including ABS staff salary costs for the workshop
- k) The report will not be made public or tabled in Parliament.

1367:

- a) Joel Watkins, Manager, Vital Statistics Unit, Statistics NZ
- b) Vina Cullum, Senior Manager, Population Statistics, Statistics NZ
- c) Costs of travel to Australia for a two day workshop with the ABS' PES Project Team (\$2,000) as salary provided as in-kind contribution by Statistics NZ
- d) Mr Watkins is Statistics NZ's Project Manager of Statistics NZ's Coverage Survey Project, a survey with similar purposes and outputs as the ABS' PES. In light of his experience in managing this type of survey in NZ he was identified as well-suited to undertake the requested independent review of ABS' planned approach. His General Manager and Senior Manager both agreed to support Joel to undertake this activity and to only require costs of travel to be covered by the ABS in recognition that there would be benefits for Statistics NZ in learning of our planned approach in 2016.
- e) No
- f) No
- g) The General Manager, 2018 Census within Statistics NZ following an approach by the ABS Program Manager, 2016 Census.
- h) No

1368: This is not an on-going review.

1371: This review will not be provided to Government. It is for internal quality assurance purposes.

1372: Government will not be responding to the review. The ABS will take into account any recommendations made for refinement of the PES strategy in its final project plan including risk management sub-plan.