

Senate Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Additional Estimates

2016 - 2017

Division/Agency: Corporate and International Tax Division

Question No: 295

Topic: Tax Avoidance Taskforce

Reference: Written

Senator: Ketter, Chris

Question:

1. In response to Senate Question on Notice no. 333, Senator Cormann listed the 2016 Budget measure 'Tax Integrity Package – establishing the Tax Avoidance Taskforce' as one of the Government's unlegislated Budget Measures. What aspects of the taskforce require legislation?
2. If legislation is required, why has legislation been delayed?
3. If legislation is not required, why would it have been listed as an unlegislated measure?
4. Had Treasury previously advised the Government on the revenue impacts of cutting staff numbers at the Australian Taxation Office?
5. Can Treasury provide estimates of revenue forgone due to staff cuts, broken down by employment group (e.g. auditors)?

Answer:

1. The establishment of the Taskforce itself did not require legislation. However, as part of this measure, a legislative change was announced to facilitate more effective information sharing between the Australian Securities and Investment Commission (ASIC) and the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).
2. Exposure draft legislation was released on 9 December 2016 and consultation closed on 13 January 2017. Following this consultation, the measure was legislated as part of the *Treasury Laws Amendment (2017 Measures No. 1) Bill 2017*, which passed both houses on 27 March 2017.
3. See response to parts 1 and 2.
4. Under the Labor Government, as part of efficiency dividends and decisions, total staff redundancies of 4,700 were to occur over the forward estimates period to 2017-18. The Government brought forward the reduction that was to occur in 2015-16. These staff redundancies were already factored into the forward estimates.
5. See response to part 4.