

Senate Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Treasury Portfolio
Budget Estimates 2014
3 June to 5 June 2014

Department/ Agency: ACNC

Question: BET 3332-3333

Topic: Government Advertising

Reference: Written – 12 June 2014

Senator: Ludwig

Question:

3332. How much has been spent on government advertising (including job ads) since Additional Estimates in February, 2014?
- a) List each item of expenditure and cost
 - b) List the approving officer for each item
 - c) Detail the outlets that were paid for the advertising
3333. What government advertising is planned for the rest of the financial year?
- a) List the total expected cost
 - b) List each item of expenditure and cost
 - c) List the approving officer for each item
 - d) Detail the outlets that have been or will be paid for the advertising

Answer:

3332. Between 26 February 2014 and 12 June 2014 the ACNC incurred advertising expenditure of \$41,290.88 (GST inclusive). This was for targeted advertising to inform charities of their obligations under the new ACNC Act and to explain how they could meet these obligations via the ACNC's on line portal.
- a) The ACNC regulates 61,000 registered charities that operate across the whole of Australia. Whilst some are large the vast majority are very small volunteer led organisations. Getting out consistent communication messages to these charities is challenging. The ACNC Act requires charities to report to the ACNC within certain time periods and ensure that they comply with basic governance standards. It is important that people running charities are aware of these as there can be liabilities and penalties if they do not comply. The ATO passed over a very out of date list; the details of charities were in a lot of cases years out of date. This limited advertising was necessary to reach the people running not-for-profits, the peak bodies and professional advisers.

The information that charities provide is published on the ACNC's Charity Register, Australia's first free, searchable database of all registered charities. The introduction and maintenance of the Charity Register is a statutory requirement and is designed to increase the accountability and transparency of the charitable sector and to maintain and enhance the public's trust and confidence in it.
 - b) The activity was approved by ACNC Commissioner.

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c) The advertising was placed by Universal McCann. The advertisements appeared as a Google search ad, on the Google display network, and as a digital display ad on sector media websites (ProBono Australia, Third Sector Australia, and Fundraising and Philanthropy Magazine).

3333. For the remainder of the financial year, the ACNC has planned or booked advertising valued at an estimated \$105,000 (GST inclusive).

a) Lost charity project:

On 3 December 2012, the ATO transferred the records of approximately 56,000 registered charities. Prior to the establishment of the ACNC, the ATO had no need to maintain an up-to-date register.

To inform these registered charities of their obligations under the ACNC Act, the ACNC has written to all registered three times. On each occasion, the ACNC has received significant numbers of return-to-sender mail, indicating that the charity is no longer at the address or they have ceased operating. The ACNC has used a variety of channels to try and contact these charities, including:

- Peak body communications
- Sector conferences and events
- Traditional media (both proactive and reactive)
- Social media

The ACNC has also assigned a small team to search for the contact details of these charities through other means, such as internet searches or third party databases.

If the ACNC is unable to contact these charities, and they do not meet their obligations, including submitting a 2013 Annual Information Statement by 30 June 2014, these charities may be removed from the ACNC Register and will therefore lose access to Commonwealth charity tax concessions.

The ACNC has booked or planned advertising in metropolitan and regional newspapers and in online channels.

b) The booked or planned advertising is estimated to total up to \$105,000 (GST inclusive).

c) The activity was approved by ACNC Commissioner.

d) This activity has been booked/planned via the Australian Government's whole of government master media buying agency, Adcorp. Adcorp will invoice the ACNC directly for this activity.