

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Supplementary Budget Estimates

20-21 November 2013

Question: **SBT 56-58**

Topic: **Commission of Audit**

Hansard Page: **page 81, 20 November 2013**

Senator WONG asked:

56-58. Senator WONG: Presumably in a number of months' time, or even now, you could tell me how many requests have been made?

Mr Ray: Yes, I can tell you how many requests we have received. We have received 46 so far.

Senator WONG: To what areas of Treasury?

Mr Ray: Thirty-eight of the 46, 82 per cent, came to Fiscal Group; six requests, so 13 per cent, to Revenue Group; one request, 2 per cent, to Markets Group; and one request to Corporate Services Group.

Senator WONG: Corporate Services? Okay. Remind me—

Mr Ray: I can break them down by division in Fiscal Group if you like?

Senator WONG: We do not have a lot of time, so do you want to put that on notice?

Mr Ray: I am happy to put that on notice.

Senator WONG: Is that okay? If we got 38 I just did not want to go—

Senator SINODINOS: We are happy to be open.

Mr Ray: Twenty for Budget Policy Division, nine for Social—

Senator WONG: Except when it comes to the budget figures into the amount of debt you going to.

Mr Ray: Nine for Social Policy Division, four for Infrastructure, Industry, Environment and Defence Division, and five for Commonwealth-State Relations Division. All six in Revenue Group at the Tax Analysis Division.

Senator WONG: Can you do that again? That was actually quite useful! I should not have cut you off.

Mr Ray: Twenty for Budget Policy Division; nine for Social Policy Division, four for Infrastructure, Industry, Environment and Defence Division, and five for Commonwealth-State Relations Division. All six in Revenue Group at the Tax Analysis Division.

Senator WONG: In terms of Treasury's policy responsibility, who has policy responsibility for the GST?

Mr Ray: We do.

Senator WONG: I know, which bit?

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Mr Ray: Revenue Group.

Senator WONG: Revenue Group, right.

Mr Ray: In terms of the GST—

Senator WONG: I should have clarified: design.

Mr Ray: Design, it is Revenue Group. In terms of the estimates of GST, that is Revenue as well, that is Tax Analysis Division, but in terms of—

Senator WONG: But distribution would be Commonwealth-State?

Mr Ray: distribution it is us.

Senator WONG: Oh, that is, Fiscal?

Mr Ray: Yes Fiscal, Commonwealth-State Relations Division in Fiscal Group.

Senator WONG: So do any of those requests relate to a change to current distribution mechanisms for the GST?

Mr Ray: We would have to take it on notice. But to be helpful, I do not think so.

Senator Sinodinos: I would be very surprised, because this is the Commission of Audit. It is not the white paper on tax reform.

Senator WONG: We can talk about that at Revenue Group, I am sure.

Senator Sinodinos: I am sure we will.

Senator WONG: Can you provide on notice the topics of each of those requests?

Mr Ray: I am happy to take it on notice.

Senator WONG: Do any of the four request to date to Revenue Group deal with the GST?

Mr Ray: I do not have that with me, so I am happy to take that on notice. But they will be here later.

Answer:

56. No.

57. The information requests the Commission of Audit has made of Commonwealth-State Relations Division (Fiscal Group), as at 19 November 2013, are for:

- Budget Paper 3 and Final Budget Outcome tables for payments to the States by function;
- background information on Commonwealth-State roles and responsibilities;
- publications on long run pressures for the Commonwealth and States;
- information on various funding arrangements; and
- information on state government revenues by source and state.

58. No.