

Senate Economics Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Supplementary Budget Estimates

2014 - 2015

Department/Agency: ATO

Question: SBT 1891

Topic: Market research

Reference: written - 31 October 2014

Senator: Ludwig

Question:

Since Budget Estimates in June, 2014:

1891. List any market research conducted by the department/agency:

- a. List the total cost of this research
- b. List each item of expenditure and cost, broken down by division and program
- c. Who conducted the research?
- d. How were they identified?
- e. Where was the research conducted?
- f. In what way was the research conducted?
- g. Were focus groups, round tables or other forms of research tools used?
- h. How were participants for these focus groups et al selected?
- i. How was the firm or individual that conducted the review selected?
- j. What input did the Minister have?
- k. How was it approved?
- l. Were other firms or individuals considered? If yes, please detail.

Answer:

1891. The ATO regularly conducts research to gauge taxpayers' attitudes and opinions about the tax and superannuation systems including our administration. This research helps inform the ATO about our reinvention work program and is a mechanism to track our journey and ensure we continue to link with taxpayers. We contract reputable research companies from our approved research panel to undertake independent research on our behalf.

From 1 June 2014 to 31 October 2014, members of our research panel were in the process of conducting four ongoing projects, including:

- ATO Prevention of Aged Debt Research
- Perceptions of Fairness in Tax Disputes
- Phase 4 of the GST Compliance Program Research
- GST Compliance Program Research Creative Testing

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We publish a list of current and past research on our website at

<http://www.ato.gov.au/About-ATO/Research-and-statistics/>

- a. From 1 June 2014 to 31 October 2014, the total cost of outsourced research was \$235,655 (GST inclusive). Projects in progress which have either started before 1 June 2014 or will be completed after 31 October 2014 have not been reported.
- b. Details of the research contracts in place during the period in question can be found on the AusTender website, www.tenders.gov.au.
- c. Members of the ATO research panel are awarded contracts to undertake research on our behalf.
- d. Research providers were identified via procurement processes from our research panel.
- e. Research providers generally conduct research from their own premises. This may be at various locations across Australia and New Zealand.
- f. Research is conducted using various methodologies including online, telephone interviews, or in person. Research can be quantitative for example surveys or qualitative for example focus groups.
- g. Yes, a number of research techniques were used.
- h. A range of methods are used to select research participants based on the nature of the research being undertaken and associated criteria. Most commonly used is random sampling using ATO own data sources.
- i. The firms conducting research were selected through a competitive procurement process.
- j. The Minister did not provide input.
- k. Market research is approved using Assistant Commissioner delegations.
- l. Yes, other firms and individuals who applied for these contracts through the tender process were considered.