

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment - Education

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Supplementary Budget Estimates 2014-2015**

Outcome 1 - Early Childhood Education and Care

Department of Education Question No. ED0639_15

Senator McKenzie asked on 22 October 2014 , Hansard page 91

Question

Geographical information – child care data

Ms Wilson: When ANAO came through in 2012 they identified that we had not been regularly updating our geographical information based on the most up-to-date data.

CHAIR: Why were we not doing that? Why were we not regularly updating it so that we could be as up-to-date as possible with these payments? Was there something internally?

Ms Paul: I do not know.

Ms Wilson: It should have been updated at the point in time of the next review after the latest data became available. I am not sure why it did not happen in this instance. Obviously, for a couple of years it did not happen.

CHAIR: Yes. Was the previous minister briefed by the department on that decision?

Ms Paul: I do not know. It must have been, on the decision, I presume. I do not know. Do you mean the decision taken in July 2013?

CHAIR: Yes.

Ms Paul: I imagine so, but we would have to take that on notice.

Answer

The Department implemented the use of the new *Australian Statistical Geography Standard* (ASGS) data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2011 census collection at the earliest possible time which was from 1 July 2013. The relevant 2011 ABS data was released in the first quarter of 2013. This enabled the Department to respond to the finding in the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) 2012 report '*Improving Access to Child Care – The Community Support Programme*' which stated that the Department should consider updating the indices from 2001 data, to more recent available data.

The previous government was provided with briefing prior to implementation.