

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Supplementary Budget Estimates 2014-2015

Agency - Fair Work Building & Construction

Department of Employment Question No.

Senator Ludwig provided in writing.

Question

FWBC - Legal Costs

Since Budget Estimates in June, 2014: 1. List all legal costs incurred by the department or agency 2. List the total cost for these items, broken down by source of legal advice, hours retained or taken to prepare the advice and the level of counsel used in preparing the advice, whether the advice was internal or external 3. List cost spend briefing Counsel, broken down by hours spent briefing, whether it was direct or indirect briefing, the gender ratio of Counsel, how each Counsel was engaged (departmental, ministerial) 4. How was each piece of advice procured? Detail the method of identifying legal advice.

Answer

1. A breakdown of the costs for this timeframe is provided below:

Professional Fees	\$1,888,811
Counsel Fees	\$688,706
Male	\$645,187
Female	\$43,519
Disbursements	\$337,937

2. FWBC has spent \$2,915,454 on legal costs between 1 June 2014 and 31 October 2014. To attempt to provide further level of detail would involve an unreasonable diversion of agency resources.

3. To attempt to provide this level of detail would involve an unreasonable diversion of agency resources.

4. FWBC procures legal services consistent with the *Legal Services Directions 2005*, Public Governance, *Performance and Accountability Act 2013* and the *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997*.