

Question: 67**Topic: Legal costs****Written: 7 March 2014****Senator LUDWIG asked:**

1. List all legal costs incurred by the department or agency since 7 September 2013
2. List the total cost for these items, broken down by:
 - a) source of legal advice;
 - b) hours retained or taken to prepare the advice;
 - c) the level of counsel used in preparing the advice; and
 - d) whether the advice was internal or external.
3. List cost spend briefing Counsel, broken down by:
 - a) hours spend briefing;
 - b) whether it was direct or indirect briefing;
 - c) the gender ratio of Counsel; and
 - d) how each Counsel was engaged (departmental, ministerial).
4. How was each piece of advice procured? Detail the method of identifying legal advice.

Answer:

The department has spent \$59,009 on legal costs since 7 September 2013.

The department has engaged external legal counsel in support of the following matters.

Source of legal advice	Cost	Hours	Level of counsel used	Nature of advice	Procurement method
Ashurst Australia *	\$8,080	0.42 6.48 5.06 11.48	Partner Senior Associate Lawyer Lawyer	External	Prequalified tender
	\$14,821	2.30 8.30 10.54 25.42	Partner Senior Associate Lawyer Lawyer		

Source of legal advice	Cost	Hours	Level of counsel used	Nature of advice	Procurement method
Ashurst Australia *	\$2,671	2.54 5.36 0.18	Senior Associate Lawyer Lawyer	External	Prequalified tender
	\$4,000	Flat rate	Unknown		
Australian Government Solicitor	\$3,500	7.00 3.50 1.00	Senior Lawyer Senior Executive Lawyer Senior Executive Lawyer	External	Prequalified tender
	\$6,042	12.60 1.90	Senior Executive Lawyer Senior Lawyer		
	\$9,091	18.30 9.25	Lawyer National Practice Leader		
HWL Ebsworth	\$3,637	2.90 0.50 5.90	Associate Partner Partner	External	Prequalified tender
	\$1,091	3.90	Partner		
	\$6,079	Flat rate	Unknown		

* Note: Reimbursement for 75% of these costs was recovered from the other parliamentary departments noting that this is a joint project which is being coordinated by the department.

The department has reimbursed the Department of Parliamentary Services for a portion of drafting costs incurred for amendments made to *Parliamentary Service Determination 2013*.