

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES 2015-16

Finance Portfolio
9 February 2016

Department/Agency: Department of Finance
Outcome/Program: 2/2.3
Topic: Audit of Commonwealth Land Holdings

Senator: Wong
Question reference number: F151
Type of question: Written
Date set by the committee for the return of answer: Friday, 1 April 2016

Number of pages: 1

Question:

With reference to an article in The Australian published on 11 December 2015 which discussed the new deal with the states in relation to infrastructure including that Finance would be preparing a new audit of Commonwealth land holdings to consider what could be sold or used for new projects. Can the Department confirm that this audit is taking place? If yes:

1. Can the Department provide an update of the work done to date on the audit?
2. When will it be completed?
3. Is it just Finance undertaking this audit – an existing team with Finance or have additional staff been brought on? Any contractors or consultants?
4. Does the audit include Defence land holdings as well?
5. Will Finance, in its audit, be providing recommendations either to the Finance Minister or to the Government in relation to whether or not any of these land holdings could be sold or used for new projects?
6. Can the Department provide a list of all Commonwealth land holdings, which includes details of the location of these land holdings, the size of the land holdings, and whether there are any properties on the land holdings?
7. Will the audit itself be made public? If not, why not?

Answer:

1. Each year, Finance undertakes the Commonwealth Land Audit, with agencies required to report details regarding their landholdings.
2. The next Audit is due to be completed in late 2016.
3. Finance undertakes the Audit with limited support from consultants.
4. Yes.
5. Refer to response provided to F35, Additional Estimates 2015-16.
- 6 – 7. As the Land Audit contains commercially confidential and sensitive information about Commonwealth land holdings, it is not made publicly available.