

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**BUDGET ESTIMATES 2014-15**

Finance Portfolio

**Department/Agency:** Finance

**Outcome/Program:** 1/1.1

**Topic:** Historical background on Government advertising

**Senator:** Jacinta Collins

**Question reference number:** F61

**Type of question:** Hansard, F&PA Committee, Page 65 and 72, 29 May 2014

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** Friday, 11 July 2014

**Number of pages:** 2

**Question:**

**Senator JACINTA COLLINS:** I want to take a longer perspective on the political advertising issue. Some of this relates to the discussion that Senator Wong had earlier about the background to the development of the MCGC and the now not operating ICC. I wonder if you could provide us with a more historical description of government advertising going back to, I suppose, even the early Howard government period.

**Mr Tune:** I cannot do that off the top of my head, Senator, but we could take something on notice and provide something brief to you.

...

**Senator JACINTA COLLINS:** Could you supplement my earlier question on a similar path by adding significant program by program expenditure in that question you took on notice over the more historic perspective on government advertising. Bring it right up to contemporary times.

**Answer:**

During the period between 1983 and 2007, the Hawke/Keating and Howard Governments both appointed Ministerial committees to oversee major and/or sensitive advertising and information activities. Formal guidelines on advertising and information campaigns were first introduced in 1995. From mid-2008 to late 2013, the Australian National Audit Office, and subsequently the Independent Communications Committee (March 2010 onwards), were responsible for providing compliance advice to Secretaries and Chief Executives on advertising campaigns to above the value of \$250,000 conducted by *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997* agencies. Current arrangements require agencies developing campaigns to comply with principles-based Guidelines. The Guidelines require that government advertising campaigns have a legitimate purpose; are conducted in an efficient and effective manner; and are not directed at promoting party-political interests. In contrast, political advertising is subject to specific legislation and regulation, largely stemming from electoral and broadcasting laws.

From the 2008–09 financial year onwards, details of advertising expenditure (on a departmental/agency basis) is available in the biannual reports on campaign advertising published at [www.finance.gov.au/advertising](http://www.finance.gov.au/advertising). Expenditure information on major or significant campaigns conducted before 2008-09 would be available either in the annual reports of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, and/or the responsible department or agency. Campaign advertising expenditure is reported on a departmental rather than a program basis. Accordingly, compiling historical advertising data on a program by program basis would represent an unreasonable diversion of departmental resources.