

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
BUDGET ESTIMATES 2014-2015

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman

Outcome/Program:

Outcome 1. Fair and accountable administrative action by Australian Government agencies by investigating complaints, reviewing administrative action and inspecting statutory compliance by law enforcement agencies.

Topic: Building Lease Costs

Senator: Senator Ludwig

Question reference number: 329

Type of question: Written

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

Number of pages: 3

Question:

- (1) What has been the total cost of building leases for the agency/department since Additional Estimates in February 2014?
- (2) Please provide a detailed list of each building that is currently leased. Please detail by:
 - a. Date the lease agreement is active from.
 - b. Date the lease agreement ends.
 - c. Is the lease expected to be renewed? If not, why not?
 - d. Location of the building (City and state).
 - e. Cost of the lease.
 - f. Why the building is necessary for the operations of the agency/department.
- (3) Please provide a detailed list of each building that had a lease that was not renewed since Additional Estimates in February 2014. Please detail by:
 - a. Date from which the lease agreement was active.
 - b. Date the lease agreement ended.
 - c. Why was the lease not renewed?
 - d. Location of the building (City and state).
 - e. Cost of the lease.
 - f. Why the building was necessary for the operations of the agency/department.
- (4) Please provide a detailed list of each building that is expected to be leased in the next 12 months. Please detail by:
 - a. Date the lease agreement is expected to become active.
 - b. Date the lease agreement is expected to end.

- c. Expected location of the building (City and state).
- d. Expected cost of the lease.
 - i. Has this cost been allocated into the budget?
- e. Why the building is necessary for the operations of the agency/department.

- (5) For each building owned or leased by the department:
- a. What is the current occupancy rate for the building?
 - b. If the rate is less than 100%, detail what the remaining being used for.

Answer:

- (1) From 1 February 2014 until 31 May 2014, the total lease expenses (rent and outgoings) for the Office was \$642,353.
- (2) A detailed list of each office premises that is currently leased by the Office is provided below:

Date Active	Date End	Location	Average Annual Cost
01/12/2009	30/11/2024	Canberra, ACT	\$1,069,923
01/02/2011	31/01/2017	Sydney, NSW	\$161,719
10/11/2008	30/11/2016	Melbourne, VIC	\$51,142
06/02/2009	04/02/2016	Brisbane, QLD	\$110,368
29/05/2012	28/05/2019	Adelaide, SA	\$101,889
02/03/2012	01/03/2015	Perth, WA	\$96,020

Accommodation will still be required in existing cities however the size and location of the accommodation will not be known until the Office approaches the market closer to the lease end dates.

All offices are required to ensure equitable access to the services offered by the Office.

Note the Office does not lease any buildings in their entirety.

- (3) The Office has not has any leases cease during the period specified.
- (4) The Office does not expect to lease any new buildings during the period specified.
- (5) The Office's leased office premises' occupancy rate expressed as a percentage is provided below:

Building Location	Occupancy Rate of Office Premises Leased
Adelaide	100.0%
Brisbane	100.0%
Melbourne	88.2%
Perth	100.0%
Sydney	44.4%
Canberra	74.4%

The remaining space is office space, some of which is used for managing fluctuations in workforce and providing a degree of flexibility for recruiting staff Australia wide.