

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee:
Answers to Questions on Notice
Budget Estimates 2015–16
Parliamentary Departments Portfolio
May 2015**

Department	Parliamentary Budget Office
Topic	Departmental Dispute Resolution
Senator	Senator Ludwig
Question reference number	12
Type of question	Written

Question

- 1 How are disputes between departmental and/or agency staff mediated?
- 2 Are any outside firms contracted to assist with this process? If yes please list them and include:
 - a the structure of payments made to each firm (e.g. retainers, fees for each consultant, etc)
 - b amount paid to each firm since the last budget
 - c when the contract with the firm commenced
 - d when the contract with the firm will expire
 - e why the firm was selected to provide the service
 - f please provide a list of disputes referred to the firm, including a brief description of the dispute.
- 3 How are the code of conduct violations by departmental and/or agency staff mediated?
- 4 Are any outside firms contracted to assist with this process? If yes: please list them, please include:
 - a the structure of payments made to each firm (e.g. retainers, fees for each consultant, etc)
 - b amount paid to each firm since the last budget
 - c when the contract with the firm commenced
 - d when the contract with the firm will expire
 - e why the firm was selected to provide the service
 - f please provide a list of disputes referred to the firm, including a brief description of the dispute.

Answer

- 1 To date, no formal dispute complaints between PBO employees have been made. Should disputes arise, they would be dealt with in accordance with relevant legislative mechanisms and PBO procedures.
- 2 No firms have been contracted to provide specific mediation services. The department's employee assistance program provider may provide mediation services if required, however this service has not been used for this purpose to date.
- 3 To date, no suspected breaches of the Parliamentary Service Code of Conduct by PBO employees have arisen. Should a suspected breach arise, it would be dealt with in accordance with section 15 of the *Parliamentary Service Act 1999* and the PBO's Procedures for Determining Suspected Breaches of the Parliamentary Service Code of Conduct.
- 4 No.