

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
BUDGET ESTIMATES 2017-18

Finance Portfolio
24-25 May 2017

Department/Agency: Finance

Outcome/Program: 2/2.2

Topic: Digital Transformation Agency – departmental expenses

Senator: McAllister

Question reference number: F69

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Number of pages: 2

Question:

a)

Senator McALLISTER: Just to come back around—I am sorry to keep doing this—to DTA, I notice that, on page 27 of the portfolio budget statement, the Digital Transformation Agenda is listed as a departmental expense for Finance. Can anyone explain why it is listed there? It is under program 2.5.

Ms Huxtable: We might have to take that on notice. I understand the chief financial officer is unwell and has had to go home, so perhaps we could take that on notice. I do not immediately know the answer to that.

Senator McALLISTER: I will spell out what am interested in so that in taking the question on notice you may be able to address these issues also. It is listed as the Digital Transformation Agenda. I think that we have previously been advised that the Digital Transformation Agenda is the responsibility of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Ms Huxtable: It is.

Senator Cormann: The agency, yes.

Senator McALLISTER: Are the agency and the agenda the same thing?

Senator Cormann: The agenda goes across the government, and the agency is the agency.

Senator McALLISTER: Is the agency responsible for the agenda?

Senator Cormann: The agency is the lead agency in driving the agenda across the whole of the government, but there are some transitional arrangements, obviously, in terms of the machinery of government related changes that have involved transferring some of the responsibilities from Finance to the Digital Transformation Agency.

b)

Senator McALLISTER: ... I would like to understand which minister is responsible for oversight of expenditure—whether it is the Minister for Finance or Minister Taylor or the Prime Minister himself—given that the agenda is the responsibility of the DTA and, as we have been previously advised, the DTA is accountable to Minister Taylor and the Prime Minister. I am just interested in what role Minister Cormann is playing in the delivery of this and what oversight he has in practical terms over this expenditure.

Ms Huxtable: We will take that on notice.

Answer:

a) Under Program 2.5 – Technology and Procurement Services, Finance remains responsible for certain Whole Of Government (WoG) Digital Transformation Agenda items. These are:

- delivery of a Digital Records Platform and the governance role for the Streamlining Government Grants Administration Program; and
- delivery of a range of WoG online services and information products, including govCMS, goxdex, govspace and The Australian Government Directory (also known as GOLD). We also manage the initiation and development of new, cost effective, innovative and practical ICT products and platforms to support Commonwealth entities.

b) As the Minister for Finance, Minister Cormann remains responsible for all expenditure within his portfolio, including expenditure relating to Digital Transformation Agenda related items as set out in a) above.