

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES 2013-2014

Finance Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of Finance

Outcome/Program: 1/1.1

Topic: Whole of Government Stationery and Office Supplies

Senator: Madigan

Question reference number: F133

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: Friday 17 January 2013

Number of pages: 2

Question:

1. Is it correct that the Whole of Government Stationery and Office Supplies panel arrangement makes mandatory all procurement (for all Agencies under the Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997) of copy paper to be exclusively purchased from any of three panellists established in March 2012 following a June 2011 Request for Tender. The panellists being: Complete Office Supplies (COS) Pty Ltd, Corporate Express, OfficeMax Australia Limited?
2. Has the Panel Arrangement been established for an initial period of three (3) years with two (2) extension options of one (1) year each, which may be exercised at the discretion of the Department of Finance?
3. In the Request for Tender used to establish the panel, did the tender evaluation include an ability to meet the Commonwealth's requirements, including:
 - (a) That the Price and Pricing structure offered on all products will be constructed in a way which, while providing value for money, supports the viability of Australian manufacturers?
 - (b) An ability and willingness of the panellist to demonstrate for the life of the arrangement that it can manage any conflict of interest issues in terms of any potential advantage that it might gain by selling imported product instead of Australian made product, including product it sells in the form of a private label?
4. If not already specified, will any of the above requirements be specified prior to the Department of Finance agreeing to extensions?

Answer:

1. In accordance with the Commonwealth Procurement Rules, the Whole of Government Stationery and Office Supplies panel arrangement is mandatory for *Financial Management and Accountability (FMA) Act 1997* agencies. The arrangement has 13 mandatory office supply product categories. Copy paper is one of the mandatory product categories. FMA agencies must purchase from one or more of the three (3) panellists.

2. Yes.
3. (a) The Request for Tender process was conducted in accordance with Commonwealth Procurement Guidelines, December 2008 and relevant procurement connected policies, which included requirements such as the *Australian Industry Participation Plan* and the *Australian Government ICT Sustainability Plan 2010 – 2015*.

(b) The Whole of Government Stationery and Office Supplies panel arrangement requires panellists to maintain, for the life of the arrangement, an Australian Industry Participation Plan approved by the Department of Industry. These plans set out how each panellist will provide full, fair and reasonable opportunity for Australian industry to participate in the arrangement. Each of the copy paper products available through the arrangement has recognised environmental chain of custody certification, such as Forest Stewardship Council, Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification or Australian Forestry Standards.
4. The Whole of Government Stationery and Office Supplies panel arrangement is compliant with current Commonwealth Procurement Rules and relevant procurement connected policies. The Head Agreements make provision for the Department of Finance to require panellists to comply with applicable Commonwealth policies as they arise.