

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

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Australian National Audit Office

Outcome/Program:

Topic: Government advertising campaigns relating to boat arrivals

Senator: Xenophon

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Type of question: Written

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Number of pages: 2

Question:

My questions are in response to the letter from the Auditor General, dated 30 September this year, in response to my questions on government advertising campaigns regarding boat arrivals.

1. I note that the Department of Immigration, which was responsible for the domestic component of the 'by boat, no visa' campaign, has informed the ANAO that the campaign ran from 20 July 2013 and ended on 5 September 2013, at a cost of \$6.8 million - over \$2 million per month. Does the ANAO have information on how this cost compares to similar domestic advertising campaigns run by the Department over a similar period of time?
2. I note that by comparison, the No way campaign's domestic cost over a three month period (June 2014 to end of August 2014) was only \$461,836. Did the Department provide the ANAO with a cost break-down for either campaign?
 - a. If so, how did they compare?
3. In his letter, Mr McPhee states that the ANAO's performance audits on the government advertising framework have demonstrated the benefits of third party scrutiny of communications - which is no longer required under the framework. Can the ANAO elaborate on those benefits?
4. Mr McPhee also advises that the ANAO will examine the framework further in the next performance audit. When will this occur?
 - a. In terms of outcomes from that audit, is the government required to respond to any findings or recommendations?

Answer:

1. The ANAO does not have information on the comparative costs of Department of Immigration advertising campaigns, as the ANAO has not conducted a performance audit of the Department's campaign advertising.

2. The ANAO does not have further comparative information on the costs of Department of Immigration campaigns. The Auditor-General's letter included all information provided by the Department. As noted in the letter, the ANAO has not conducted a performance audit to further examine the Department's advertising campaigns.
 - a. See answer to question 2.
3. A series of ANAO performance audits found that third party review of a proposed advertising campaign's consistency with government guidelines (resulting in the provision of advice to the agency chief executive by the third party) and the chief executive's subsequent certification of a campaign's compliance with government guidelines, had promoted compliance with the campaign advertising framework. See Performance Audit Report No.24 2011-12 *Administration of Government Advertising Arrangements: March 2010 to August 2011* and Performance Audit Report No.54 2012-13 *Administration of Government Advertising Arrangements: August 2011 to March 2013*.
4. The ANAO is in the process of planning a further cross-entity performance audit of government advertising arrangements.
 - a. The responsible Australian Government entity responds to a recommendation(s) made in ANAO performance audit reports.