

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES 2015-16**

Finance Portfolio  
20 October 2015

**Department/Agency:** Department of Finance

**Outcome/Program:** 2/2.2

**Topic:** Australian Hearing scoping study – date, cost and briefings

**Senator:** Cameron

**Question reference number:** F35

**Type of question:** Hansard Proof, F&PA Committee, Pages 102-103, 20 October 2015

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** Friday, 4 December 2015

**Number of pages:** 2

**Question:**

**Senator CAMERON:** Minister, I am sorry to interrupt you but this is not a trick question. I am simply asking: what date did you receive this scoping study?

**Senator Cormann:** I would have to take that on notice. It formed part of the 2015-16 budget process.

**Senator CAMERON:** Okay. What was the final cost of the scoping study?

**Senator Cormann:** I would have to take that on notice.

**Senator CAMERON:** Okay. Do you know how much was paid to the external consultants? I think Freehills and PricewaterhouseCoopers? Is there a break up on that available?

**Senator Cormann:** I can take that on notice. That information would have, of course, been published at the time. We have actually gone through this in previous estimates, but we can provide go back through that.

...

**Senator CAMERON:** I assumed that you have had a briefing from the department.

**Senator Cormann:** Well and truly.

**Senator CAMERON:** When did you get that?

**Senator Cormann:** Again, I will have to take that on notice.

**Senator CAMERON:** Briefing of briefings? Could you give me the details of when those briefings took place?

**Senator Cormann:** Sure.

...

**Senator CAMERON:** Could you, maybe, short-circuit this and, on notice, provide us details of who has been briefed on the scoping study?

**Senator Cormann:** Sure. That might be quite an extensive exercise, so we will take it on notice and we will see what we can most usefully provide.

**Senator CAMERON:** If you tell us who has been briefed.

**Ms Halton:** Senator, just to clarify, it is not my practice to provide a list of names of officers. We will give you an indication of the departments.

**Senator CAMERON:** Departments.

**Ms Halton:** Yes, departments.

**Answer:**

The Minister for Finance received the finalised scoping study in mid-February 2015.

The final amounts paid to all external consultants (GST incl) in respect of the scoping study were:

Pricewaterhouse Coopers (business adviser)	\$219,864.00
Herbert Smith Freehills (legal adviser)	\$325,336.16
Australian Government Solicitor	\$2,869.35

The Minister for Finance was briefed on the draft scoping study in late December 2014, and received further briefings from the department in early February 2015 and from the scoping study business adviser in mid-February 2015.

The scoping study business adviser also briefed the then Minister for Human Services in late-January 2015, and the Minister for Health, the Assistant Minister for Health and the then Assistant Minister for Social Services, and/or their advisers, in mid-February 2015.

The Department of Health and the Department of Human Services were represented on the Australian Hearing Scoping Study Steering Committee. This Committee met for the last time in December 2014 to discuss the draft key findings of the scoping study.