

**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:** 2/2.1

**Topic:** Spectrum Review

**Senator:** Wong

**Question reference number:** F66

**Type of question:** Written

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

**Number of pages:** 2

**Question:**

Regarding the announcement on 25 August 2015 on the Government's response to the Spectrum Review:

1. Did Finance have anything to do with this work?
2. If so, can the Department detail their involvement?
3. As part of this, there was a particular task in relation to the financial arrangements for Commonwealth spectrum use – is Finance involved in this?
4. Can the Department describe what this means, what are the implications regarding financial arrangements for spectrum use? How is it presented in the budget papers / financial statements?
5. Are there any implications for the budget papers / financial statements as a result of the Government's response to the Spectrum Review as a whole? If so, can the Department detail what these are?

**Answer:**

1. and 2. The [Government's response to the Spectrum Review](#) represents a Government decision based on the consideration of the review's recommendations. The Department of Finance (Finance) provided briefing to the Minister for Finance as part of this process.

The Spectrum Review was conducted by the then Department of Communications (now the Department of Communications and the Arts) in conjunction with the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA). The Department of Communications consulted Finance during the course of the review. However, Finance had no direct role in its conduct.

3. As detailed in Attachment A to the Government's announcement dated 25 August 2015, the review of Commonwealth spectrum use commenced in mid-2015. The outcomes of this review are due to be considered by the Government in mid-2016. Finance is being consulted on this work.

4. The process for licensing radiofrequency spectrum, including pricing arrangements, is managed by the ACMA. The Government licenses spectrum to commercial users on a commercial basis, while Commonwealth users of spectrum do not generally pay full commercial rates. Spectrum licensing revenue collected by the ACMA is recorded in the ACMA's financial statements and returned to the Official Public Account. Spectrum revenue is presented in Budget Paper 1, Statement 4, as part of non-taxation receipts.

5. There are no immediate Budget implications arising from the Government's response to the Spectrum Review dated 25 August 2015. Any future financial implications will be subject to the Government's consideration of detailed proposals to reform the spectrum management and planning framework.