

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S PORTFOLIO

Program: General

Question No. AE16/119

Senator Ludwig asked the following question at the hearing on 9 February 2016:

Since the change of Prime Minister on 14 September, 2015:

1. List all legal costs incurred by the department or agency
2. List the total cost for these items, broken down by source of legal advice, hours retained or taken to prepare the advice and the level of counsel used in preparing the advice, whether the advice was internal or external
3. List cost spend briefing Counsel, broken down by hours spent briefing, whether it was direct or indirect briefing, the gender ratio of Counsel, how each Counsel was engaged (departmental, ministerial)
4. How was each piece of advice procured? Detail the method of identifying legal advice

The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:

1-4. Under the *Legal Services Directions 2005*, each Commonwealth department and agency is required to provide a report on its legal expenditure for the previous financial year within 60 days of the end of that financial year. This information must be published by 30 October each year. To provide the level of detail requested for the portfolio for a different time period would involve an unreasonable diversion of resources.

The most recent Commonwealth Legal Services Expenditure Report is available on the department's website:

<http://www.ag.gov.au/Publications/Pages/CommonwealthLegalServicesExpenditure.aspx>