

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

Group: 2

Program: 1.8

Question No. SBE14/174

Senator Bilyk asked the following question at the hearing on 20 November 2014:

Noting that Junior Counsel's fees have already partially been reported on Austender and are therefore a matter of public record (Attachment A):

1. How many Junior Counsel have been retained to support Mr Stoljar at the TURC?
 - a. What are their names?
2. What is the daily hearing rate for each Junior Counsel?
3. What is the total cost of hearing fees paid to each Junior Counsel thus far?
4. What is the daily or hourly rate paid to each Junior Counsel for work outside of hearings?
5. What is the total amount paid to each Junior Counsel for non-hearing work since the TURC commenced?
6. How many lawyers are employed by the TURC?
7. Are they employed under the Australian Public Service Act 1999?
 - a. If so, what level are they employed at?
8. Have any other solicitors been retained, from a private law firm or the AGS?
 - a. If so, can you describe that arrangement and the costs?
9. Does each Junior Counsel receive travelling allowance or any other allowance if they are required to preside over hearings away from their home base?
 - a. If so, what is the amount?
 - b. How is it calculated?
 - c. What is the total amount of travelling allowance paid to Junior Counsel since the TURC commenced?
10. Are there any other accommodation costs paid on behalf of Junior Counsel?
11. When Junior Counsel travels for TURC hearings, do they travel in business class?
12. How much has been paid in air fares for Counsel Assisting since the TURC commenced?
13. Are Counsel Assisting paid a mobile telephone allowance?
 - a. If so, how much?
14. Have Counsel Assisting been provided with a mobile telephone?
 - a. If so, what make and model?

15. What is the cost of any other hospitality afforded to Counsel Assisting, or any meals, sustenance, gifts or other incidentals?

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

1. As at 20 November 2014, three junior counsel had been retained.
 - a. Michael Elliott, Fiona Roughley and Thomas Prince.
2. It is general practice that the terms and conditions (including daily or hourly rates) on which the Commonwealth engages individual legal counsel, including Royal Commissioners and Counsel Assisting, are not disclosed as this information is commercial-in-confidence.
3. See (2) above.
4. See (2) above.
5. See (2) above.
6. Minter Ellison has been retained to provide solicitor assisting services. The Office of the Royal Commission has a number of legally qualified staff at various APS levels performing various functions.
7. See (6) above.
8. Refer to answers provided in SBE14/178.
9. No.
10. Yes. Accommodation for interstate travel is provided by the TURC.
11. Travel is determined by reference to the Attorney-General's Department Employment Relations Advices.
12. To provide this amount would require an unreasonable diversion of resources.
13. No.
14. Yes. It is an iPhone 5.
15. \$619 has been reimbursed to Mr Elliott for taxi fares.