Question No: 43

Program No: General

Hansard Ref: ECA114

Topic: LEGAL – FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS

Senator Birmingham asked:

1. How many FOI applications has the Department handled this year?
2. Can you also advise us of how many were successful, unsuccessful or partly successful?

Answer:

1. Twenty-one FOI requests have been handled this calendar year.
2. Information about FOI requests handled by the Department from 1 January 2009 to 19 October 2009, together with details about the status of requests as at 19 October 2009, is set out below.

Requests handled by the Department from 1 January 2009 to 19 October 2009

Date Received	Decision on Access (as at 19 October 2009)
07/11/08	Information provided to applicant outside FOI. Taken to be withdrawn
09/12/08	Access granted in full
15/12/08	Access granted in part
15/12/08	Access granted in part
04/02/09	Access refused
02/03/09	Access granted in part
11/03/09	Access refused
20/03/09	Taken to be withdrawn – applicant did not pay deposit
20/03/09	Access granted in part
08/04/09	Access granted in part
24/04/09	Transferred in full to Department of Health and Ageing
14/05/09	Taken to be withdrawn – applicant did not pay deposit
19/05/09	Taken to be withdrawn – applicant did not pay deposit
18/05/09	Taken to be withdrawn – applicant did not pay application fee
03/07/09	Access refused - s.24A – documents not found or do not exist
08/07/09	Still being processed
09/07/09	Withdrawn by applicant
10/07/09	Access granted in part
01/09/07	Taken to be withdrawn – applicant did not pay deposit
01/09/09	Access granted in full
10/09/09	Access refused

Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Communications and the Arts

Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice

Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearings October 2009

Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy Portfolio

Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy

Question No: 44

Program No. 1.2

Hansard Ref: Hansard Ref: Written

Topic: STAFFING

Senator Birmingham asked:

Please provide the names, salaries, titles and responsibilities of all staff in the Minister's Office.

Please indicate what their salaries were in October 2007 (or when they started) and what their salaries are now.

Please identify which staff have government cars as part of their package. What model vehicles do they drive? What is the cost of the vehicle packages?

Which staff are entitled to fly business class?

What is the home base for each of the staff? If they are not located in the home base of the employing Minister/Parliamentary Secretary or Canberra, what is the reason?

Answer:

This information is not held by the Department. Ministerial staff and their arrangements are managed by the Ministerial and Parliamentary Services Group in the Department of Finance and Deregulation.

Question No: 45

Hansard Ref: Written

Topic: STAFF TRAINING

Senator Birmingham asked:

> In relation to both Departmental and ministerial staff, please provide details of staff training activities undertaken this financial year, and planned for next financial year. Please provide a breakdown of costs, the nature of the training programs run, numbers of staff involved by level of employment and any instances of external consultants being engaged. Where external consultants were engaged, please detail their expertise and the specific deliverables of the program.

Answer:

Consistent with previous responses, the following relates to departmental staff only as the Department does not collect information relating to the training of ministerial staff.

2009-10 financial year - CORE TRAINING - as at 04/11/09	
Tailored, Department specific skills based training workshops covering: financial management; APS Values and the Code of Conduct; policy development; Indigenous cultural awareness; legal awareness; intro to the Senate; about the House; writing skills; preparing for promotion; managing and improving performance; and ethical leadership.	
	Costs ($)
Printing & ancillary	1,510
Provider costs	152,638
Venue/catering	5,600
Total cost for 49 training workshops as at 4/11/09	159,748
	Number
Total number of training workshops as at 4/11/09 Note: The 49 training workshops comprised of : 4 X 2 day workshops 20 X 1 day workshops 25 X ½ day workshops	49
Total actual participants as at 04/11/09	546
Participant numbers by classification as at 04/11/09 Note: Figures show the total number of course attendees. Numbers were impacted by the introduction of managing and improving performance training and the requirement that all staff must attend.	30 x APS1; 38 x APS2; 35 x APS3; 20 x APS4; 18 x APS5; 20 x APS6; 91 x EL1; 198 x EL2; 47 x SES Total of 497 Note. An additional 49 participants did not indicate their classification level.

2009-10 financial year - CAPABILITY DEVELOPMENT - as at 04/11/09	
Intensive management development programs for specific classification levels. Programs are between five and seven days duration, depending on level. Programs are held off-site and therefore incur venue and catering costs.	
	Costs ($)
Printing & ancillary/profile tools	9,270
Provider	94,329
Venue/catering	18,545
Total cost for 3 development programs as at 4/11/09	122,144
	Number
Total number of development programs as at 4/11/09	3
Total actual participants as at 4/11/09	45
Participant numbers by classification as at 4/11/09	8 x APS1: Management Ground Rules- 3.5 days 8 x APS5 and 12 x APS6: Management Development Program- 5 days 17 x EL1: Strategic Management Program- 7 days

2009-10 financial year - EXTERNAL APS DEVELOPMENT - as at 04/11/09		
APSC Leadership and expertise development opportunities, including Career Development Assessment Centres (CDAC) and the Australia, New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG).		
2009-10	**$**	**Participant**
ANZSOG	48,000	2 x SES
CDAC	12,000	1 x EL2

2010-2011
It is anticipated that a similar level of expenditure and schedule of core training and capability development programs will be provided during 2010-2011.

External consultants
The external consultants engaged for departmental training programs have specific skills and experience in developing and delivering tailored training programs that are relevant to the APS and departmental context. A number of training programs also require consultants to possess specific subject matter expertise on topics such as current APS legal, financial management and policy requirements. Capability development programs require external consultants with highly specialized skills in facilitating group and experiential learning techniques.

Question No: 46

Program No. 1.2

Hansard Ref: Hansard Ref: Written

Topic: HOSPITALITY

Senator Birmingham asked:

What is the Department's hospitality spend for 2008-09? Please detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events.

For the Minister's office, please detail total hospitality spend for 2008-09. Please detail date, location purpose and cost of each event.

Answer:

The Department's hospitality spend for 2008/09 is $5486.01.

Date	Location	Purpose	Cost
23/10/08	Sydney	Hospitality to representatives of the press, to provide background briefing on digital switchover to key journalists.	$254.00
30/10/08	Sydney	Hospitality to representatives of the press, to provide background briefing on digital switchover to key journalists.	$300.00
29/7/08	Melbourne	Meeting with Panel of experts and senior officials from the NBN Taskforce regarding the NBN Project	$3816.50
29/10/08	Canberra	Dinner with Japanese Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications	$550.00
13/12/08	Canberra	NBN Taskforce offered drinks to the Panel of Experts and Specialist Advisers at the close of the Proponent presentations	$144.22
16/1/09	Canberra	Replenishment of entertainment cabinet for small scale official entertainment	$421.29

The Minister's office spend for 2008/09 is $216.00

Date	Location	Purpose	Cost
15/10/08	Canberra	Meal with Chair of Regional Telecommunications Independent Review	$216.00

Question No: 47

Program No. 1.2

Hansard Ref: WRITTEN

Topic: MINISTERIAL OVERSEAS TRAVEL

Senator Birmingham asked:

Has the Minister travelled overseas on official business in 2008-09?

If so, where was the travel, what was the purpose and what was the duration?

What was the total cost of:
  a) travel
  b) accommodation, and
  c) any other expenses?

How many Ministerial staff or family accompanied the Minister?

For these staff (please outline their position)/family what was the cost of:
  a) travel
  b) accommodation, and
  c) any other expenses?

How many officers from the Department accompanied the Minister?

In relation to these Departmental officers (please outline their position), what was the total cost of:
  a) travel
  b) accommodation, and
  c) any other expenses?

Were any costs or expenses, as covered above, met by private companies, unions or other organisations? If so, please provide details.

Please detail total travel expenses met by the Department. In relation to all departmental travel expenses, please provide estimated resulting carbon emissions. Were any offsets purchased? If so, how many and at what cost?

Answer:

Following Budget Estimates, the Minister responded to Estimates QoN 69 detailing costings of ministerial overseas travel which covered all acquitted costs relating to ministerial overseas travel during the financial year 2008/2009. No further ministerial overseas travel was undertaken during financial year 2008/2009.

Question No: 48

Program No. 1.2

Hansard Ref: Hansard Ref: Written

Topic: MEDIA MONITORING

Senator Minchin asked:

Does the Department or Minister's office use Media Monitors to monitor door stops at Parliament House during sitting weeks?

Who requested the doors to be monitored and when?

Does the Department get transcripts of all door stop interviews of Members and Senators during sitting weeks or just door stops relevant to the Department's responsibilities?

Does the Minister's office get transcripts of the door stop interviews of Members and Senators during sitting weeks?

How much does each door stop transcript included add to the cost to the Department?

Has the requirement to include online sites in the media monitoring contract for the portfolio added to the cost of providing media monitoring services? If so, by how much?

Answer:

No, unless specifically tasked by either the Department or Minister's Office to do so. **Occasionally the Minister's Office requests the Department to obtain a media monitors transcript of a doorstop interview.**

As above – only when requested to do so. Both the Senate and House of Representatives would be monitored only during sitting weeks.

The Department would only request transcripts relevant to the Department or Minister's responsibilities.

Only if relevant and usually requested through the Department's Media and Speeches Team.

The cost would depend on the length of door stop, with an additional cost incurred any time a door stop transcript is ordered.

Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Communications and the Arts

Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice

Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearings October 2009

Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy Portfolio

Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy

The Department continues to be charged per news clip as set out in the contract with Media Monitors, which includes a limited number of online sites.

- The cost of media monitoring services depends on the number of articles containing the relevant keywords. Therefore, the total cost of this service can depend on current issues in the media and the mix of these between online and offline. As this mix is constantly changing, a breakdown is not readily available.