

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Additional Estimates 14 – 15 February 2007

Question: **Item 4 (ACCC)**
Topic: **Resourcing of the Telecommunications area and Content
Regulation Branch of the ACCC**
Hansard Page: **Written**

Senator CONROY asked:

- 1. What is the level of resourcing in the telecommunications area of the ACCC?**
- 2. What has been the increase over the past five years?**
- 3. How many staff work there now? How many worked there five years ago?**
- 4. What is the content regulation branch doing?**
- 5. How many people work there? Are there any proposals for more regulation of content? If so which mediums will this apply to?**
- 6. If not, please specify in general terms what is being examined and the reasons behind examining further regulation?**

Answer:

1. For the 2006-2007 financial year the financial resourcing of the Communications Group is \$8,974,653.
2. Over the last five years, resourcing levels in the Communications Group has increased from \$4,133,279 in 2001-2 to \$8,974,653 in 2006-7. This represents an increase of around 117 per cent.
3. There were 59 effective full time staff in the Communications Group as at the end of February 2007. As at the end of February 2002, there were 38 effective full time staff.
4. The ACCC does not have a specific content regulation branch. The convergence section of the ACCC's Communications Group is tasked with examining competition issues relating to access to content, among its other functions.
5. Currently, the convergence section has nine staff members that work on a wide range of issues, one of which is access to content. Access to content is addressed under the *Trade Practices Act 1974*. The ACCC is not aware of proposals for additional competition regulation that would apply specifically to content.
6. The response to question 4 specifies, in general terms, what issues are examined by the ACCC in relation to access to content.