Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Supplementary Budget Estimates

19 – 20 October 2011

Question No: 113

Topic: FOI requests

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Senator Cormann asked:

Senator CORMANN: Moving on to FOI requests, how many documents has the department published under the changes to the FOI Act that came into effect on 1 May—under the Information Publication Scheme?

Ms Balzary: We will have to take that on notice.

Senator CORMANN: Is there a backlog at present of documents to be released under the Information Publication Scheme?

Ms Balzary: I am sorry; I thought you had a specific area you were interested in under FOI. Are you after general numbers?

Senator CORMANN: I am asking you about the number of documents the department has published under the changes to the FOI Act that came into effect on 1 May—that is, under the Information Publication Scheme.

Dr Parkinson: Can we clarify—you would like the number of documents, rather than FOI requests that we responded to?

Senator CORMANN: Actual documents, yes.

Dr Parkinson: We would have to find out how many documents there are.

Senator CORMANN: Would you be able to tell me whether there is a backlog at present?

Senator Wong: What do you mean by backlog?

Ms Balzary: There is no backlog. We have active FOI requests at the moment but we do not have a publishing backlog.

Senator CORMANN: That was the question.

Ms Balzary: Any decision that has been taken has been published.

Answer:

Treasury has published 195 documents as specified or optional information under the Information Publication Scheme (IPS). Most documents were already published on the Treasury website. Since 1 May 2011, Treasury has also published 217 documents accessed through FOI requests under the disclosure log requirement of the FOI Act. However, Treasury commenced publishing information accessed under FOI requests from 1 Jan 2011 and in total 453 such documents have been published. There is no backlog of documents to be published under either the IPS or disclosure log provisions.