

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Additional Estimates Hearings 2004-2005, 14 February 2005

Question: PM 32

Outcome 1, Output 2.1

Topic: Social Policy Division

Hansard Page: Direct on Notice

Senator Evans asked:

1. How many staff currently work in Social Policy Division? Please also break this number down by level, gender, part-time/full-time status?

Answer: Total number of staff in Social Policy Division – 39 (as at 21 February 2005)

By level/status

LEVEL:	NUMBER:	STATUS / FT/PT
SES 2	1	FT
SES1	4	FT
EL2	8	FT
EL1	10	9 FT/ 1 PT
APS 6	8	FT
APS 5	4	FT
APS 4	2	FT
APS 3	2	FT
APS 1/2	0	
TOTAL:	39	39

By gender

LEVEL:	FEMALE	MALE
SES 2	1	
SES1	3	1
EL2	5	3
EL1	9	1
APS 6	6	2
APS 5	4	
APS 4	2	
APS 3	1	1
APS 1/2		
TOTAL:	31	8

2. Are there any secondments to Social Policy division from the other agencies?

Answer:

As at 21 February 2005, Social Policy Division has four officers on secondment. One is from the Health Insurance Commission, one from the Department of Health and Ageing and two from the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations.

3. What are those secondees doing in Social Policy Division? What are they working on?

Answer: They are undertaking the normal work of the Division of providing policy advice to the Prime Minister on social policy issues.

4. Are any Social Policy Division staff outposted to the other agencies?

Answer: No

5. What are they doing? What is their role?

Answer: See answer to question 4.

6. Please list all Interdepartmental Committees in which Social Policy Division participates with FaCS/Human Services/Centrelink/CSA.

Answer: As at March 2005, there are two Interdepartmental Committees in which Social Policy Division participates with FaCS. One relating to the Supported Accommodation Assistance Programme and one relating to the Home and Community Care Programme. As at March 2005, the Division is not participating in any IDCs involving Human Services, Centrelink or the CSA.

7. Please describe the role of these IDCs.

Answer: The role of these IDCs is to develop policy advice for government in relation to forthcoming negotiations with States and Territories on these programmes.

8. Did Social Policy Division have a role in determining the revised Departmental arrangements that have applied since the election in respect of FaCS/Human Services/DEWR/DEST? What was the nature of that role?

Answer: Social Policy Division contributed to the formulation of advice to the Prime Minister on changes to administrative arrangements following the election.

9. What did Social Policy Division see as the purpose of making these changes?

Answer: The administrative changes following the election were a decision of the Prime Minister. The reason for these changes were outlined by the Prime Minister in his press release of 22nd October 2004.

10. Does the Division have a future role in monitoring/managing the relationships between the agencies involved?

Answer: The Division does not have an ongoing role in monitoring new administrative changes. The Division might, from time to time, provide advice to the Prime Minister in relation to these agencies as part of its normal advising role.

11. Was Social Policy Division involved in the development of the families.gov.au website?

Answer: No

12. Why was this website established?

Answer: Questions relating to the establishment, content and cost of the families.gov.au website should be addressed to the Minister for Family and Community Services.

13. Who determined the website content?

Answer: See answer to question 12.

14. What has been the cost of setting up the website?

Answer: See answer to question 12.

15. Who bore the cost?

Answer: See answer to question 12.

16. Does PM&C have any future role in monitoring/overseeing the website content?

Answer: No

17. Was Social Policy Division involved in the development of the new booklet on family assistance?

Answer: In accordance with standard practice, Social Policy Division made comments relating to factual accuracy on a close-to-final version of the new booklet on family assistance. Questions relating to the development, content and cost of the booklet should be addressed to the Minister for Family and Community Services.

18. Why was it decided that the booklet was necessary?

Answer: Questions relating to the purpose, development, content and cost of the booklet should be addressed to the Minister for Family and Community Services.

19. Who determined the content?

Answer: See answer to question 18.

20. What was the cost of the new booklet?

Answer: See answer to question 18.

21. Who has borne the cost?

Answer: See answer to question 18.

22. Please outline the extent of Social Policy Division's involvement in the development of the Government's election policies in the FaCS portfolio.

Answer: Prior to the election the division performed its normal policy advising function. From the commencement of the caretaker period, in accordance with the guidance set out in the Caretaker Conventions, the Division did not provide policy advice to the Government.

23. How many staff were involved in this process? What levels of staff were involved in the development of the policies?

Answer: See answer to question 22.