

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES 2013-2014

Finance Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of Finance

Outcome/Program: 3/3.1

Topic: Ministerial Staff Security Clearances

Senator: Ludwig

Question reference number: F148

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: Friday, 11 April 2014

Number of pages: 2

Question:

- 1) What is the policy for ministerial staff security clearances?
- 2) How many staffers employed by the government under the MOPS Act have security clearances?
 - a) At what level?
 - b) If not, why not?
 - c) For what period of time since 7 September 2013 have they held these classifications?
 - d) Have any staffers been refused a security classification at the level initially or subsequently applied for?
 - e) Have any staffers withdrawn their application for a security classification?
 - i. If so, at what level?
 - ii. If so, when did this occur?
 - iii. If so, what office were the staff employed in?
- 3) How many seconded departmental officers acting in ministerial offices, including DLOs have security clearances?
 - a) At what level?
 - b) If not, why not?
 - c) For what period of time since 7 September 2013 have they held these classifications?
 - d) Have any DLOs been refused a security classification at the level initially or subsequently applied for?
 - e) Have any DLOs withdrawn their application for a security classification?
 - i. If so, at what level?
 - ii. If so, when did this occur?
 - iii. If so, what office were the staff employed in?

Answer:

- 1) The policy for ministerial staff security clearances is contained in *Determination 12/1: Determination regarding Ministerial Staff* – 30 January 2012 which can be found at the following link: http://www.finance.gov.au/sites/default/files/2012-1_Determination.pdf

2) a) – e) The Department of Finance is responsible only for initiating the security clearance process with the Australian Government Security Vetting Agency (AGSVA), when staff employed under the *Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984* commence employment with a Minister's Office. AGSVA is responsible for the granting of security clearances as well as maintaining records on the status of security clearances granted.

3) The relevant Portfolio Department retains responsibility for the security clearances of all departmental employees working within a Minister's Office. In relation to the Finance portfolio, there are four departmental employees working as DLOs.

- a) NV1 (Secret) level.
- b) N/A.
- c) All DLOs in the Ministerial offices since 7 September 2013 have held appropriate security clearances for their roles.
- d) - e) No.