

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates 24-28 February 2014

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Outcome/Program: 1.1 Prime Minister and Cabinet

Topic: Inter-Country Adoption Advisory Group

Senator: Senator Lisa Singh

Question reference number: 249

Type of Question: Written

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

Number of pages: 2

Question:

1. What is the cost of the interdepartmental committee?
2. What is the process of appointment of members to the interdepartmental committee?
3. Which stakeholders will be involved?
4. Who is being consulted by the interdepartmental committee?
5. How many submissions have been received about how to make the process of inter-country adoption easier?
6. Will the committee's findings been made public?
7. What outcomes have been set for the council?
8. Will the committee be implementing any of the recommendations from the 2005 Inquiry Report into Overseas Adoption?

Answer:

1. The cost of the Interdepartmental Committee (IDC) is being absorbed by relevant departments as part of their ongoing operations.
2. On 18 December 2013, the Prime Minister wrote to the Attorney-General, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection and the Minister for Social Services, asking them to nominate senior officials from their departments to constitute the IDC.
3. The Prime Minister wrote to major stakeholders in the Intercountry adoption community inviting submissions to the IDC on Intercountry Adoption. The Attorney-General's Department also put an open invitation to make submissions on the Intercountry adoption page of its website. The IDC on Intercountry Adoption has also engaged with the states and territories.

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4. See answer to question 3.
5. The IDC received 107 submissions, most of which set out impediments to the current approach to Intercountry adoption in Australia and suggestions for how this could be improved. In addition, the Prime Minister received approximately 60 items of correspondence most of which raise similar issues.
6. The IDC will provide a report to the Prime Minister. Whether the report will be published or not will be a matter for the Prime Minister to consider.
7. The IDC has terms of reference to provide advice on the impediments to Intercountry adoption and what immediate and longer term proposals could be taken to improve and streamline the delivery of Intercountry adoption in Australia.
8. The recommendations from the 2005 *Overseas Adoption in Australia* report are relevant to the work of the IDC and are being considered as part of that work.