

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

**Finance and Deregulation Portfolio**

**Department/Agency: Department of Finance & Deregulation**

**Outcome/Program: 2/2.2**

**Topic: Cross-Government Cooperation in Property and Accommodation**

**Senator: Moore**

**Question reference number: F32**

**Type of question: Hansard, F&PA Committee, Page 29; 30 May 2013**

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer: Friday 12 July 2013**

**Number of pages: 2**

**Question:**

**Senator MOORE:** Sure. And again in this area: is there any discussion with the state governments? It seems to me that there is a lot of potential, particularly in regional centres where you have three levels—but mainly talking about state—or two levels of government that are in this business of accommodation and property. There could well be some co-operation there. Is there any intent or possibility of widening that to cross-government cooperation?

**Mr Whalen:** There possibly is. I do not have the details on whether that is occurring at the moment. But, for example, in Finance we actually do work with some of the state governments, who have similar interests in property, to actually share information and also have an opportunity to get across what some of their property and accommodation pressures are, what ours are and to identify if there are opportunities to work together to do that.

**Senator MOORE:** If there is any information on that, can the committee get it? It would be very useful in how those interdepartmental liaisons are going.

**Answer:**

The Department of Finance and Deregulation (Finance) recognises similarities in the issues and challenges faced by Commonwealth and State and Territory Governments in property management. Finance and State and Territory Governments have been drawing from shared processes and governance arrangements to mirror identified better practice initiatives.

Finance has had dealings with the Australian Procurement and Construction Council Incorporated. The Council consists of Australian State and Territory property representatives who share information and practices including in the area of property management. Through liaison with members of the Council and ongoing liaison with other State and Territory officials, Finance has drawn from a number of experiences of the States as part of its consultation in developing the Commonwealth Property Management Framework (CPMF), including the establishment of governance mechanisms and a density target for office accommodation.

For example, the Queensland State Government has a central approval function for new lease commitments. Finance has drawn from the Queensland State Government's approval process when developing similar governance arrangements under the CPMF, to optimise the use of existing property (leased and owned) by the Commonwealth. In addition the initial business case development to support property decision-making captured by the CPMF draws from practices observed by the Victorian Government.

The focus of these processes extends beyond property decision making in relation to regional centres. Finance understands these Frameworks to be compatible should a multi-jurisdictional property need in a regional centre arise.

Individual Commonwealth and most State and Territory agencies are responsible for determining and managing their own property interests. The Property and Construction Division of Finance is yet to be made aware of a specific collective regional property interest to apply the Commonwealth or other jurisdictional property frameworks.