

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates 15-18 October 2012

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Outcome/Program: 1.1.1 Domestic Policy

Topic: COAG Committee Costs & Structure - Funding

Senator: Senator Payne

Question reference number: 6

Type of Question: FPA, P71

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 30 November 2012

Number of pages: 4

Question:

Senator PAYNE: If you could take that on notice I would be grateful. In an answer to Question on Notice No. 126, in relation to the COAG committee structure and its costs, you indicated that the costs of ongoing administration of the secretariats of standing councils and fora, the select councils, the legislative and governance fora, are met by those councils and fora. Is that actually out of departmental resources for each jurisdiction, with the individual costs met by individual agencies? I do not imagine the standing councils and fora are in the business of making money for themselves, so how do they do that?

Ms Cross: I think it varies from council to council. Some councils have an amount of money that they set aside for national projects and secretariat, and the usual formula is that the Commonwealth would contribute 50 per cent and the states would share the other 50 per cent according to their population share, although that can differ from council to council depending on what the historical arrangements have been. We would need to check that for every council to give you a specific answer, but in many cases it will come out of some sort of budget that has been set aside for that council.

Senator PAYNE: Given the number of select and standing councils and the legislative and governance fora that currently exist, perhaps we could do it by exception-if it is not funded in the way to which you just referred, the 50-50, could you indicate to the committee, on notice, the way in which it is funded.

Ms Cross: I am happy to do that.

Answer:

Please refer to the attached table.

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Council	Funding
Standing Council on Community and Disability Services	The Secretariat is funded by the Commonwealth, States and Territories and New Zealand, with a fixed 25 per cent contribution from the Commonwealth, a fixed 1.5 per cent contribution from New Zealand and contributions from the States and Territories for the remainder based on population proportion percentages.
Standing Council on Energy and Resources	The Secretariat is funded by the Commonwealth Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism.
Standing Council on Environment and Water	The Secretariat is funded by the Commonwealth, States and Territories.
Standing Council on Federal Financial Relations	The Secretariat is funded by the Commonwealth Department of the Treasury.
Standing Council on Health	The Secretariat is funded by the Commonwealth, States and Territories and New Zealand with a fixed 50 per cent contribution from the Commonwealth and a population proportion percentage contributed by the States and Territories, and New Zealand contributing a fixed amount annually, which is generally comparable to Queensland's contribution based on population size.
Standing Council on Law and Justice	The Secretariat is funded by Commonwealth, States and Territories and New Zealand as follows: the Commonwealth, New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Victoria, Western Australia and New Zealand contribute 11.56 per cent; the Australian Capital Territory, the Northern Territory and Tasmania 6.36 per cent.
Standing Council on Police and Emergency Management	The Secretariat is funded by the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department. The host jurisdiction of the Chair, which rotates annually, contributes to the cost of actual meetings.
Standing Council on Primary Industries	The Secretariat is funded by the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

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Standing Council on Regional Australia	The Secretariat is funded by the Commonwealth Department of Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government.
Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood	The Secretariat is funded by the Commonwealth, States and Territories, and New Zealand as follows: the Commonwealth, New South Wales and Victoria contribute 14 per cent; Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia contribute 10.33 per cent; and Tasmania, the Northern Territory, the Australian Capital Territory and New Zealand contribute 6.75 per cent.
Standing Council on Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment	The Secretariat is funded by the Commonwealth, States and Territories and New Zealand, with the Commonwealth contributing 50 per cent and the States and Territories and New Zealand the remaining 50 per cent.
Standing Council on Transport and Infrastructure	The Secretariat is funded by the Commonwealth Department of Infrastructure and Transport.
Select Council on Climate Change	The Secretariat is funded by the Commonwealth Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency.
Select Council on Disability Reform	The Secretariat is funded by the Commonwealth Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.
Select Council on Housing and Homelessness	The Secretariat is funded by the Commonwealth Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.
Select Council on Immigration and Settlement	The Secretariat is funded by the Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Citizenship.
Select Council on Women's Issues	The Secretariat is funded by the Commonwealth, States and Territories, with the Commonwealth contributing 52 per cent and the States and Territories the remaining 48 per cent.

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Select Council on Workplace Relations	The Secretariat is funded by the Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.
Legislative and Governance Forum on Consumer Affairs	The Secretariat is funded by the Commonwealth, States and Territories, with 30 per cent met by the Commonwealth and the remaining 70 per cent by the States and Territories based on population share.
Legislative and Governance Forum on Corporations	The Secretariat is funded by the Commonwealth Department of the Treasury.
Legislative and Governance Forum on Food Regulation	The Secretariat is funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing.
Legislative and Governance Forum on Gene Technology	The Secretariat is funded by the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator which provides funding to the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing for the costs of Secretariat services.
Legislative and Governance Forum on the Murray-Darling Basin	The Secretariat is jointly funded by the Commonwealth and Basin States. Commonwealth – 21.4 per cent. New South Wales – 13.8 per cent. Victoria – 34 per cent. Queensland – 1.2 per cent. South Australia – 29.3 per cent. ACT – 0.3 per cent.