

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 21-22 MAY 2012

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(BE12/0067) Program: Internal Product

Senator Cash asked:

FOI requests: I refer to AE12/0073 where Senator Humphries asked if “the department/agency received any advice on how to respond to FOI requests” and the response received basically mentioned the FOI Act and various internal guidelines and guidance notes – Why was no mention made of the external advice received from barristers and solicitors in relation to responding to FOI requests?

Answer:

The solicitors' fees and Counsel fees paid by the department were for representation at the Administrative Appeals Tribunal. A small component relates to legal advice on the interpretation of sections of the FOI Act.