

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO
2013-14 Additional Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: Cross Outcome - Across Programs

Question No: 192

Topic: Legal Costs

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Ludwig asked:

List all legal costs incurred by the department or agency since 7 September 2013:

- a. List the total cost for these items, broken down by source of legal advice, hours retained or taken to prepare the advice and the level of counsel used in preparing the advice, whether the advice was internal or external.
- b. List cost spent briefing Counsel, broken down by hours spent briefing, whether it was direct or indirect briefing, the gender ratio of Counsel, how each Counsel was engaged (departmental, ministerial).
- c. How was each piece of advice procured? Detail the method of identifying legal advice.

Answer:

The Department is unable to provide portfolio expenditure on legal services from other sources since 7 September 2013 without diverting substantial resources.

Due to the complexities and the high level of resourcing required across the portfolio to collect the information, legal services expenditure is obtained and published once a year in the Department's annual report.

The Department's 2012-13 Annual Report is available at:

<http://www.dss.gov.au/about-the-department/publications-articles/corporate-publications/annual-reports/fahcsia-annual-report-2012-2013>

DSS (formerly FaHCSIA) 2013-14 legal services expenditure will be published in the 2013-14 Annual Report by 30 October 2014, in accordance with the *Legal Services Directions 2005* obligations.