

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES – 2 MARCH 2017 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Human Services

Topic: Legal Costs

Question reference number: 62 (HS 66)

Senator: Bilyk

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 21 April 2017

Number of pages: 1

Question:

- a) What was the Department's total spend on external legal services (including services provided by the Australian Government Solicitor) (GST inclusive) for calendar year 2016?
- b) Can an itemised list of costs of each legal matter (GST inclusive) please be provided?
- c) Can a list of relevant Contract Notices published on Austender please be provided?

Answer:

- a) The Department is required under the *Legal Services Directions 2005* to report specific information about legal services expenditure to the Office of Legal Services Coordination (OLSC) annually. The information for financial year 2015-16 has been provided to the OLSC and is available publically. It would be an unreasonable diversion of departmental resources to provide the total spend on external legal services for the calendar year of 2016, which is not required to be reported under the *Legal Services Directions 2005*.
- b) The Department is required under the *Legal Services Directions 2005* to report specific information about legal services expenditure to the OLSC annually. It would be an unreasonable diversion of departmental resources to provide an itemised list of costs of each legal matter, which is not required to be reported under the *Legal Services Directions 2005*.
- c) This information is available publicly.