

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Social Services Portfolio
2014-15 Budget Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: Cross Outcome - Across Programs

Question No: 903

Topic: Contracts for Temporary Staff

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Ludwig asked:

1. How much did the department/agency spend on temporary or contract staff since September 7th 2013?
2. How many temporary or contract staff were employed since September 7th 2013?
3. How many temporary or contract staff are currently employed?
4. How much was paid for agencies/companies to find temporary/contract staff?
5. How much is budgeted in the 2014/15 year for contract staff?
6. What policies/criteria govern the appointment of Contract staff?
7. How is the use of contract staff consistent with a professional, independent public service?

Answer:

Aged Care Commissioner

1. Nil
2. One temporary staff member was employed since 7 September 2013, but she is a permanent DSS employee on secondment.
3. Nil.
4. Nil. The department handled the secondment process.
5. One APS 6 employee wage for 8 months of the 2014-2015 financial year.
6. The Office of the Aged Care Commissioner complies with all DSS policies regarding secondments and recruitments.
7. The Office of the Aged Care Commissioner has employed a DSS permanent employee on a temporary basis to cover a parental leave position. Thereby ensuring a negative cost.

Aged Care Pricing Commissioner

1. The Office of the Aged Care Pricing Commissioner has spent approximately \$268,665 on temporary or contract staff since 7 September 2013.
2. Six temporary or contract staff were employed (non-concurrently) since 7 September 2013.
3. Three contract staff are currently employed.
4. Nil.
5. There is not a specific budget for contract staff.
6. The Office of the Aged Care Pricing Commissioner refers to Department of Social Services policies and procedures for appointment of contract staff.
7. Refer to Department of Social Services.

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Australian Aged Care Quality Agency

The Australian Aged Care Quality Agency commenced operations on 1 January 2014. The answers below are for the period 1 January 2014 to 31 May 2014.

- 1 – Nil.
- 2 – Nil.
- 3 – Nil.
- 4 – Nil.
- 5 – Nil.
- 6 – Recruitment policy, HR delegations.
- 7 – n/a

Australian Institute of Family Studies

1. \$12,154.33 (ex GST).
2. Two.
3. One.
4. Nil.
5. \$30,886 (ex GST).
6. Australian Institute of Family Studies is guided by the Contract Procurement Rules and associated policies when appointing temporary, short-term staff. Contract staff members are appointed when a short-term, temporary skill-set gap is identified, that cannot be filled from within the Institute.
7. Contract staff are only used to fill temporary short-term skill gaps in our requirements. All contract staff are employed following suitable background checks and are held accountable under the Australian Public Service Code of Conduct.

Social Security Appeals Tribunal

1. Nil.
2. Nil.
3. Nil.
4. Nil.
5. Nil.
6. Contract/temporary staff are engaged at the Social Security Appeals Tribunal only where there is a critical business need and no viable alternative.
7. See response to 6.

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National Disability Insurance Agency

1. The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) spent \$1,855,175.58 on temporary and contract staff from 7 September 2013 to 4 June 2014.
2. From 7 September 2013 to 4 June 2014, 69 temporary and contract staff were employed with the NDIA.
3. As at 4 June 2014, there were 44 temporary and contract staff employed with the NDIA.
4. This information is not readily available and to respond to this question would be a significant diversion of resources.
5. This information is not readily available and to respond to this question would be a significant diversion of resources.
6. The NDIA has procurement policies which govern the procurement of all goods and services within the NDIA. The NDIA is committed to achieving value for money outcomes for all procurement activities, including the engagement of contract staff, which includes encouraging competition, ensuring efficient, effective, economical and ethical use of resources and ensuring accountability and transparency in decision-making.
7. The NDIA's procurement policies are consistent with a professional and independent public service. The NDIA's employees are required to conduct all procurements in an ethical manner which includes recognising and dealing with conflicts of interest, dealing with all potential suppliers equitably and achieving value for money for the Agency.

Department of Social Services

1. The information requested is not readily available and would require a significant diversion of departmental resources.
2. 22 temporary non-ongoing contract staff have been employed from 7 September 2013 to 4 June 2014.
3. 36 temporary non-ongoing contract staff are currently employed.
4. The information requested is not readily available and would require a significant diversion of departmental resources.
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6. The information requested is not readily available and would require a significant diversion of departmental resources.
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