

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016, 1 – 2 June 2015

Ref No: SQ15-000553

OUTCOME: 0 - Whole of Portfolio

Topic: Departmental Dispute Resolution

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Ludwig, Joe

Question:

1. How are disputes between departmental and/or agency staff mediated?
2. Are any outside firms contracted to assist with this process? If yes: please list them, please include:
 - a) The structure of payments made to each firm (e.g. retainers, fees for each consultation etc).
 - b) Amount paid to each firm since the last budget.
 - c) When the contract with the firm commenced.
 - d) When the contract with the firm will expire.
 - e) Why the firm was selected to provide the service.
 - f) Please provide a list of disputes referred to the firm, including a brief description of the dispute.
3. How are code of conduct violations by departmental and/or agency staff mediated?
4. Are any outside firms contracted to assist with this process? If yes: please list them, please include:
 - a) The structure of payments made to each firm (e.g. retainers, fees for each consultation etc).
 - b) Amount paid to each firm since the last budget.
 - c) When the contract with the firm commenced.
 - d) When the contract with the firm will expire.
 - e) Why the firm was selected to provide the service.
 - f) Please provide a list of disputes referred to the firm, including a brief description of the dispute.

Answer:

1. Mediation services are available through the Department's Employee Assistance Program provider.
2. No specific provider has been contracted to provide mediation services.
 - a. The Employee Assistance Program provider (the provider) is paid an annual fee for its services; mediation is paid for on a case by case basis. The fee paid is \$242.00 per hour.

- b. During the 2014-15 financial year, the Department paid the provider \$2,400.00 for mediation services.
 - c. The provider started providing its services to the Department on 1 July 2011.
 - d. The Department's contract with the current provider expires 30 June 2015.
 - e. Refer to question 1.
 - f. The Department's Employee Assistance Program provider does not provide this information due to the confidential nature of the service.
3. Breaches of the Code of Conduct are not subject to mediation.
4. Not applicable.