

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2016 - 2017, 19 October 2016

Ref No: SQ16-000426

OUTCOME: 2 - Health Access and Support Services

Topic: Telstra Health

Type of Question: Hansard Page 86, 19 October 2016

Senator: Watt, Murray

Question:

Senator WATT: Why did Telstra get this contract?

Mr Bowles: They were the successful tenderer?

Senator WATT: But why?

Mr Bowles: Because they were the successful tenderer.

Senator WATT: But what made them successful?

Mr Bowles: They went through the evaluation process and they were very strong in the evaluation process.

Senator WATT: This was one of the questions we could not get answered at the hearing the other day. In the end, why was it that Telstra was the successful tenderer?

Dr Southern: We took their proposal and analysed it against the selection criteria. Ultimately, they came out as the best value for money proposal against the criteria.

Senator WATT: I remember asking—and it being taken on notice—to see the tender evaluation documents or some sort of summary to explain why it was Telstra and not the others. Has that been provided?

Dr Southern: In our responses to the questions on notice, we had taken one on notice in relation to VCS against a couple of the criteria, which we provided a response to. But I do not recall that we had a question on notice about the full evaluation.

Senator WATT: If you did not, could you take that on notice today.

Mr Bowles: We will take on notice what we can provide you—understanding commercial in confidence issues and all the things that go with that.

Answer:

Tender evaluation documents are inherently commercial-in-confidence in nature and not for public release, as they rely heavily on the submissions made by the entities who respond to the Request for Tender. This is the case for the National Cancer Screening Register tender evaluation and the potential to compromise those organisations who responded to the Request for Tender is high.