

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice
Additional Estimates Hearings February 2016
Communications Portfolio
Australia Council

Question No: 168(g)

Australia Council

Hansard Ref: Written, 19/02/2016

Topic: Staffing reductions

Senator Ludwig, Joe asked:

Since the change of Prime Minister on 14 September, 2015:

1. How many staff reductions/voluntary redundancies have occurred?
 - (a) What was the reason for these reductions?
2. Were any of these reductions involuntary redundancies? If yes, provide details.
3. Are there any plans for further staff reductions/voluntary redundancies? If so, please advise details including if there is a reduction target, how this will be achieved, and if any services/programs will be cut.
4. If there are plans for staff reductions, please give the reason why these are happening.
5. Are there any plans for involuntary redundancies? If yes, provide details.
6. How many ongoing staff left the department/agency? What classification were these staff?
7. How many non-ongoing staff left department/agency from? What classification were these staff?
8. What are the voluntary redundancy packages offered? Please detail for each staff level and position
9. How do the packages differ from the default public service package?
10. How is the department/agency funding the packages?

Answer:

1. There have been 10 staff reductions.
 - (a) Organisational restructure.
2. Yes. Four staff reductions were involuntary redundancies. No suitable alternative positions available in new structure.
3. Yes. There are up to four more position reductions to be effected between 9 February and 31 May 2016. Two are voluntary redundancies. This will complete the reduction target to meet budget. As a consequence operational priorities were reviewed under the Australia Council Corporate Plan.
4. The organisational restructure following the Budget measures is in effect from 1 December 2015, with the reduction being implemented within the 2015-16 financial year as required by the Portfolio Budget Statement.

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5. Yes as per question 3 above, with two further involuntary redundancies between 10 February and 31 May 2016.
6. Four ongoing staff have left the Australia Council as at 9 February 2016:
 - 3 x Australia Council Band 5
 - 1 x Australia Council Band 3.
7. 13 non-ongoing staff have left the Australia Council as at 9 February 2016:
 - 7 x Australia Council Band IEA
 - 2 x Australia Council Band 5
 - 2 x Australia Council Band 4
 - 1 x Australia Council Band 3
 - 1 x Australia Council Band 2.
8. Enterprise Agreement Staff severance two weeks per completed year of service to a maximum of 48 weeks and four or five weeks' notice. Individual Employment Agreement (IEA) staff severance per National Employment Standards with notice periods per contracts.
9. For Enterprise Agreement Staff the package does not differ from the APSC Enterprise Agreement packages.
10. Applied to Department of Finance for an overspend of operational expenditure.