

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications

Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice

Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearings November 2014

Communications Portfolio

Australia Post

Question No: 338

Program No: Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Conditions of Government Contracts and Agreements

Senator Ludwig asked:

1. Do any contracts managed by the Department/Agency contain any limitations or restrictions on advocacy or criticising Government policy? If so, please name each contact. When was it formed or created?
2. What are the specific clauses and/or sections which state this, or in effect, create a limitation or restriction?
3. Do any agreements managed by the Department/Agency contain any limitations on restrictions on advocacy or criticisms of Government policy? If so, please name each agreement. When was it formed or created?
4. What are the specific clauses and/or sections which state this, or in effect, create a limitation or restriction?
5. For each of the contracts and agreements, are there any particular reason, such as genuine commercial in confidence information, for this restriction?
6. Have any changes to financial or resource support to services which advocate on behalf of groups or individuals in Australian society been made? If so, which groups? What was the change?
7. Has any consultation occurred between the Department/Agency and any individuals and/or community groups about these changes? If so, what consultation process was used? Was it public? If not, why not? Are public submissions available on a website?
8. If no consultation has occurred, why not?
9. Did the Minister/Parliamentary Secretary meet with any stakeholders about changes to advocacy in their contracts and/or agreements? If so, when? Who did he/she meet with?

Answer:

- 1-9. Australia Post manages a suite of standard form customer and supplier facing commercial contracts as well as a number of standard form leasing and licensing agreements (Standard Form Agreements). These Standard Form Agreements do not contain any provisions limiting the advocacy or criticism of Government policy. Since September 2013, Australia Post has entered into a limited number of non-Standard Form Agreements with Commonwealth government departments or agencies. Clauses around limitations on advocacy or criticisms of Government policy do not typically feature in Australia Post's negotiations of such non-Standard Form Agreements.