

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Additional Estimates

26 February 2014

Question: AET 1745-1746

Topic: Property Costs (ASIC)

Written: 7 March 2014

Senator BUSHBY asked:

1745. What efforts has your department made to shift towards best practice in property leasing to achieve best value for money?
1746. Are you making any efforts yet to reconfigure existing office space to achieve a staff occupancy of 14 sqm or less, and exploring opportunities to sub-let the liberated floor space? If not, why not? What market experts have you engaged on these issues and have they advised you that efficiencies are unable to be achieved?

Answer:

1745. ASIC takes a proactive approach to the management of its leased property and has a Property Management Plan in place. Policy and guidance is included in the ASIC Workplace Design Principles, Fit Out Standards and Flexibility Principles to ensure inefficiencies are dealt with in a planned and appropriate manner. Accommodation density and requirements are tracked and reviewed by the Property Board on a quarterly basis
1746. ASIC has already divested or sublet surplus space identified in its Property Management Plan since 2011 and work continues in this regard. Current activity includes the engagement of property leasing consultants in the ACT and NT to assist with the sublease or surrender of these offices in these locations with a view of co-locating its staff with other Commonwealth agencies. In four other locations, ASIC has made space available within current tenancies for other government agencies.

To achieve 1:14 ASIC will be engaging consultants to undertake a workplace utilisation study. The results of this study will enable ASIC to fully investigate changes to its Workplace Design Principles, including consideration of Activity Based Working fit out styles.

Due to the nature of ASICs work, major changes to its work habits and fit out design is required to accommodate the new 1:14 ratio. This will result in significant capital costs and will need to be carefully planned to ensure alignment with the lease expiry timeline and cost effective outcomes.