

Senate Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Budget Estimates

2014 - 2015

Department/Agency: ACCC
Question: BET 392-395
Topic: Departmental Dispute Resolution
Reference: written - 17 June 2015
Senator: Ludwig, Joe

Question:

392. How are disputes between departmental and/or agency staff mediated?
393. 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.
394. How are code of conduct violations by departmental and/or agency staff mediated?
395. 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:

392. Disputes between departmental and/or agency staff may be managed internally by staff convening informal meetings and discussions to resolve the matter or they may be mediated with the assistance of outside firms.
393. Yes. In the financial year 2014-15 Optum were engaged to assist with one mediation.
- a) It was a one-off payment for pre mediation, report writing and correspondence.
 - b) \$1,815 (inc. GST) has been paid to Optum since the last budget.
 - c) The contract with the firm commenced on 26 September 2014.
 - d) The contract with the firm expired on 13 January 2015.
 - e) Optum is the ACCC's Employee Assistance Program provider and was selected to provide the service.
 - f) The one matter referred to Optum involved manager and staff concerning a conduct and performance matter.

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394. Code of conduct violations by departmental and/or agency staff are managed by ACCC staff or outside firms are engaged to mediate the matter.
395. No outside firms have been contracted to assist with mediation since the last budget.