Division/Agency: Financial and Procurement Division
Question No: 200
Topic: Treasury Capabilities to support government
Reference: Hansard page 46-47 (29 May 2017)
Senator: Ketter, Chris

Question:

Senator KETTER: I want to talk about two measures that are in the budget, providing additional funding to Treasury—enhancing Treasury capabilities for government and legislative drafting, additional resources. With enhancing Treasury capabilities for government, can you describe precisely what the $9.3 million in the 2017-18 year and $13.9 million in the 2018-19 year in expenses will be used for?
Mr P Robinson: Could I ask you to repeat the question please?
Senator KETTER: This is in relation to the enhancing Treasury capabilities to support government measure, page 167, Budget Paper No. 2.
Mr P Robinson: The budget provided, as you said, $29.5 million over two years to improve our capability in four areas—tax policy, forecasting, revenue modelling and foreign investment. We have just arrived back and so I do not know if you ask the macro people about the modelling side. These four areas we have identified—
Senator KETTER: Yes, I can read those in the budget papers. I am looking at precisely what that money will be used on. Will there be additional staff recruited in relation to that?
Mr P Robinson: Yes.
Senator KETTER: What groups in Treasury will benefit from these additional expenses? What tasks are envisaged with this additional resource?
Mr P Robinson: We will determine the final allocations of the resourcing as part of our 2017-18 internal budget process, which we are going through now—working with each of our groups and divisions. But these are the four key areas. On the tax side, you mentioned there is a measure regarding increasing our legislative capability—
Senator KETTER: I am going to come to that in the second but firstly I am dealing with—
Mr P Robinson: The measure here on tax policy is to build our capability across the board in providing tax policy advice to the government.
Senator KETTER: I understand that, Mr Robinson. I understand that you are trying to be helpful but I am looking at some specifics as to how that money—
Senator Cormann: We may have to take the specifics on notice. You are looking for specific numbers of staff in which areas?
Mr P Robinson: We will get down to that as part of the internal budget process.
Senator Cormann: We will provide whatever information we can provide on notice.

Answer:

The measure *Enhancing Treasury's Capability to Support Government* has two elements: maintaining ASL at 2016-17 levels and resourcing to pay staff up to that level, and an additional 20 ASL to improve capability in key areas. In relation to the 20 additional ASL, the department is currently in the process of finalising its 2017-18 internal budgets, including the allocation of this funding and ASL to specific activities.