

Senate Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Supplementary Budget Estimates

2014 - 2015

Department/Agency: AOFM

Question: SBT1007-1010

Topic: Legal Costs

Reference: Written - 30 October 2014

Senator: Ludwig, Joe

Question:

Since Budget Estimates in June, 2014:

1007. List all legal costs incurred by the department or agency
1008. List the total cost for these items, broken down by source of legal advice, hours retained or taken to prepare the advice and the level of counsel used in preparing the advice, whether the advice was internal or external
1009. List cost spend briefing Counsel, broken down by hours spent briefing, whether it was direct or indirect briefing, the gender ratio of Counsel, how each Counsel was engaged (departmental, ministerial)
1010. How was each piece of advice procured? Detail the method of identifying legal advice

Answer:

1007. For the period 2 June 2014 to 30 October 2014 legal costs were \$14,307. An additional \$440 was also incurred in the period for the provision of an audit certificate from a private legal firm for the 2013-14 financial accounts.
1008. For the period 2 June 2014 to 30 October 2014, the AOFM spent \$7,899 on legal services from the Australian Government Solicitor. This comprised of \$899 on advice on *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* and \$7,000 on the sun setting of regulations relating to debt management. For the same period the AOFM spent \$6,408 from private legal firms, relating to advice on syndication agreements and a taxation ruling for the transmutation of stock. The legal costs were done on a time and materials basis, at an agreed rate, and billed accordingly.
1009. Nil.
1010. Legal advice obtained from the Australian Government Solicitor was on a limited tender basis. Other legal advice was via the Legal Services Multi User Listing. The legal costs for all legal advice obtained by the AOFM was done on a time and materials basis at an agreed rate and billed accordingly.