

Senate Economics Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Supplementary Budget Estimates

2016 - 2017

Division/Agency: Australian Bureau of Statistics

Question No: 35

Topic: 2016 Census – limited tender

Reference: Written

Senator: Ketter, Chris

Question:

1) Was IBM the only firm approached in the “limited tender”?

Answer:

1) Yes.

As documented on page 61 in the ABS submission to the senate enquiry: The ABS engaged Capability Driven Acquisition (CapDA) to undertake an assessment of ABS capabilities and capacity and to conduct a detailed assessment of the ICT market to provide the ABS with an understanding of the capacity and availability of suitable companies to assist in delivering the online form.

A detailed scan of the market for vendors that could satisfy the requirements was undertaken. This included twenty five vendors with an Australian presence who could meet the requirements. CapDA conducted interviews with nine of these vendors.

The CapDA assessment recommended that, in consideration of the limited time frame and the inherent risks in working with any new organisation, the ABS should consider a limited tender to IBM given their existing experience of the application and Census program. IBM had successfully provided the online Census applications in the 2006 and 2011 Censuses.

Following this assessment, ABS approached IBM directly via limited tender. In September 2014 the IBM tender was determined as being value for money and later that month the ABS engaged IBM for the supply of the 2016 online Census.