Division/Agency: Australian Bureau of Statistics
Question No: 43
Topic: 2016 Census – Tendering for IT contract
Reference: Written
Senator: Ketter, Chris

Question:

1) When the ABS was tendering the IT contract, were options like 'infinitely scaled' capacity – that is, capacity grows as demand grows, as per sites like Amazon Web Services – considered? If not, why not?

Answer:

1) The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) statement of requirements was that any tendered solution must be able to support the expected load from the public completing the 2016 Census. The ABS considered the solution proposal submitted by IBM against the ABS statement of requirements. As a part of this solution proposal a number of hosting and architecture options were proposed – including a number of cloud hosting models. IBM recommended the provided solution which was a mixture of scalable cloud hosting for static resources, and dedicated infrastructure for receiving submitted data and persisting it, in encrypted form, into a database. This solution was one which met the ABS security and legislative requirements, along with adhering to Government policy around cloud services and citizen information.