

## Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

### QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Additional Estimates 2015 - 2016

#### Agency – Fair Work Ombudsman

Department of Employment Question No. EMSQ16-000534

Senator Ludwig provided in writing.

#### Question

#### FWO - Reviews

Since the change of Prime Minister on 14 September, 2015:

1. How many new reviews (defined as review, inter-departmental group, inquiry, internal review or similar activity) have been commenced? Please list them including:
  - a. the date they were ordered
  - b. the date they commenced
  - c. the minister responsible
  - d. the department responsible
  - e. the nature of the review
  - f. their terms of reference
  - g. the scope of the review
  - h. Who is conducting the review
  - i. the number of officers, and their classification level, involved in conducting the review
  - j. the expected report date
  - k. the budgeted, projected or expected costs
  - l. If the report will be tabled in parliament or made public
2. For any review commenced or ordered, have any external people, companies or contractors being engaged to assist or conduct the review?
  - a. If so, please list them, including their name and/or trading name/s and any known alias or other trading names
  - b. If so, please list their managing director and the board of directors or equivalent
  - c. If yes, for each is the cost associated with their involvement, including a break down for each cost item
  - d. If yes, for each, what is the nature of their involvement
  - e. If yes, for each, are they on the lobbyist register, provide details.
  - f. If yes, for each, what contact has the Minister or their office had with them
  - g. If yes, for each, who selected them
  - h. If yes, for each, did the minister or their office have any involvement in selecting them,
  - i. If yes, please detail what involvement it was
  - ii. If yes, did they see or provided input to a short list
  - iii. If yes, on what dates did this involvement occur
  - iv. If yes, did this involve any verbal discussions with the department
  - v. If yes, on what dates did this involvement occur
3. Which reviews are on-going?
  - a. Please list them.
  - b. What is the current cost to date expended on the reviews?
4. Have any reviews been stopped, paused or ceased? Please list them.
5. Which reviews have concluded? Please list them.
6. How many reviews have been provided to Government? Please list them and the date they were provided.
7. When will the Government be responding to the respective reviews that have been

completed?

8. What reviews are planned?

- a. When will each planned review be commenced?
- b. When will each of these reviews be concluded?
- c. When will government respond to each review?
- d. Will the government release each review?
- i. If so, when? If not, why not?

## Answer

1. One review was commenced; the Community Based Employment Advice Services (**CBEAS**) Review.

The Fair Work Ombudsman (**FWO**) currently administers Australian Government funding for five community organisations through the CBEAS Grants Programme. The programme is scheduled to cease on 30 June 2016.

The current funding arrangements were introduced by the previous government as part of the 2012–13 Budget. As a terminating Budget measure, there is no mechanism to extend the program beyond this date. Any future funding is subject to the Budget process.

The Review was commissioned by the FWO, which is a portfolio agency of the Department of Employment, within the responsibility of Minister Cash. An Executive Level 2 Director from the FWO's Education Resources Team had primary oversight of the review.

The independent Review was conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers Australia (**PWC**), pursuant to an agreement with the FWO dated 17 November 2015. The FWO commissioned the Review in accordance with the Guidelines of the current CBEAS Grants Program. The objectives of the Review included that PWC:

- assess the effectiveness of the CBEAS against the program guidelines;
- review the alignment between program activity and program need; and
- identify potential future options for delivery of the program.

The scope of the review was limited to the five organisations funded by the FWO to deliver the CBEAS program.

PWC issued its final report in January 2016. A copy of the report was provided to each of the CBEAS on 18 February 2016.

The cost of the review was \$72,127.27, which was accommodated within the FWO's existing budget.

2. PWC is a large and well established professional services firm. According to the website [www.pwc.com.au](http://www.pwc.com.au), PWC is overseen by a Governance Board comprising 11 partners. Michael Happell is the current PWC Chair. To the FWO's knowledge, PWC is not on the Australian Government lobbyist register.

PWC was engaged by officers of the FWO in accordance with Commonwealth Procurement rules and the Fair Work Ombudsman Procurement Policy. The Minister and the Minister's Office were not involved in selecting PWC for involvement in the Review. PWC engaged directly with FWO in respect of the Review. The FWO is not aware of any contact between PWC and the Minister or the Minister's Office in respect of the Review.

3. There are no ongoing reviews.
4. No reviews have been stopped, paused or ceased.
5. The CBEAS Review described above has concluded.
6. The PWC Report was provided to the Minister's Office on 2 February 2016 for noting.
7. The Review was conducted by the FWO and for the FWO. The PWC Report was provided to the Minister for noting only.
8. No reviews are planned.