

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment - Education

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Budget Estimates 2014-2015

Cross Portfolio

Department of Education Question No. ED0119_15

Senator Ludwig provided in writing.

Question

Dept & all agencies: Contracts for Temporary Staff

1. How much did the department/agency spend on temporary or contract staff since September 7th 2013?
2. How many temporary or contract staff were employed since September 7th 2013?
3. How many temporary or contract staff are currently employed?
4. How much was paid for agencies/companies to find temporary/contract staff?
5. How much is budgeted in the 2014/15 year for contract staff?
6. What policies/criteria govern the appointment of Contract staff?
7. How is the use of contract staff consistent with a professional, independent public service?

Answer

Department of Education

- 1) The process required to collate agency expenditure on contractors and/or non-ongoing employees would involve an unreasonable diversion of departmental resources.
- 2) Information on staff recruited through recruitment agencies is not captured centrally. Line areas manage these arrangements. For numbers of non-ongoing employees refer to ED0190_15 (SQ14-000852) and ED0194_15 (SQ14-000866).
- 3) Information on the number of contract staff is not kept centrally. Line areas manage these arrangements. For numbers of non-going employees refer to ED0190_15 (SQ14-000852) and ED0194_15 (SQ14-000866).
- 4) \$11,085.03 was paid to find contract staff.
- 5) Budgets are still being finalised for the 2014-15 financial year.
- 6) The *Financial Management Act 1997* (FMA Act) and procurement rules govern arrangements for procuring the services of contract staff to meet business needs. Panel arrangements have been established consistent with procurement rules including the Deed of Standing Offer (PRN23014) established by the former DEEWR in March 2010 and is used by the Department of Education. The Deed forms the basis of the agreement with panel vendors for the supply of ICT contract personnel. The department uses the panel to secure the services of ICT contract personnel. Decisions for the approval to spend monies on the supply of contractor services have been made in accordance with the FMA Act and will continue to be made under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act).

- 7) Contractors are used to provide specialist skill sets that are not available within the department to meet a short term business need. The use of contractors assists with capacity requirements and adds capability to the existing workforce for those skills that are required on an ad hoc and/or temporary basis.

The Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority has provided the following response.

- 1) \$1,973,973
- 2) 42 agency temporary staff.
- 3) 26 x agency temps as at 20th June 2014. Eight of the 26 will cease at the end of June. The other agency temporary contract end dates are under review.
- 4) Supplier fee is 7.05% which is included in the above spend.
- 5) This is not a separate budget item
- 6) A CV is submitted, an interview conducted and a reference check undertaken.
- 7) The agency temporary staff perform work that supports the business in meeting its changing service delivery requirements including specific work for the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood such as NAPLAN Online.

The Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders has provided the following response.

- 1) \$126,944.86
- 2) 7 (based on payments made)
- 3) N/A
- 4) N/A
- 5) N/A
- 6) AIATSIS Procurement Policy
- 7) Contract staff are used to fill short-term needs for capacity

The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership has provided the following response.

- 1) \$52,870.34
- 2) 4
- 3) N/A
- 4) N/A
- 5) N/A
- 6) N/A
- 7) N/A

The Australian Research Council has provided the following response.

- 1)

Departmental	1,364,715.70	
Administered	672,649.68	
<u>Total</u>	<u>2,037,365.38</u>	(GST exclusive)
- 2) 11
- 3) 25
- 4) \$0
- 5) The ARC's budget has not been finalised at this stage
- 6) The ARC has a Deed of Standing Offer in place with the Austrade Recruitment Services Panel.
- 7) Having the flexibility to greater control staffing levels during peak times allows for contracts to be varied if services are no longer needed. It also allows for the agency to hire the right person for the right job and the right time which potentially saves money and time

The Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency has provided the following response:

- 1) \$244,447.67 (GST incl)
- 2) 6
- 3) 4
- 4) The agency fee is incorporated in the rates.
- 5) \$100,000
- 6) Contract staff include IT Helpdesk and any other short term engagements.
- 7) Most staff are permanent APS employees and contract staff are only to fill short term requirements.