Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment - Education

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2014-2015

Cross Portfolio

Department of Education Question No. ED0203_15

Senator O'Neill provided in writing.

Question

Staffing and redundancies

1. How many redundancies were there in 2013-14 across the department? How many were voluntary? How many redundancies is the department forecasting in 2014-15, and over the forward estimates? 2. How much has the Department set aside to fund these redundancies? How much does the department anticipate these redundancies will cost in payouts? 3. How many temporary staff has the department engaged in 2013-14 to cover vacant positions, and what has been the total cost of those temporary staff engagements? 4. What has been the average contract period for those staff, and how many were engaged through a recruitment agency? 5. Do such contracts come out of the Employee Benefits funds outlined in the budget papers, or from another funding source? 6. How many permanent new staff did the department recruit in 2013-14? 7. How many of those required the approval of the Public Service Commissioner? How many applications has the Commissioner refused? What positions did the Commissioner refused to approve, and what was pay level each of those positions was?

Answer

1. There were six voluntary redundancies offered and accepted for the period from 18 September 2013 to 31 May 2014. There were a further 91 voluntary redundancies offered on 27 June 2014. Some of these redundancies will not take effect until early 2014-15. The department currently has no plans for a further departmental–wide voluntary redundancy program in 2014-15, and over the forward estimates. There are no plans for involuntary redundancies.

2. The department did not set aside specific funds for these redundancies. The cost of redundancies will be met from within 2013-14 budget allocations. It is anticipated the total redundancy severance cost will be around $7.9m.

3. The department engaged 12 temporary staff (non-going employees) in 2013-14. The total cost of non-ongoing employees is not available. The department does not store this information centrally.

4. The average contract period for these non-ongoing employees was 7.7 months. Information on staff recruited through recruitment agencies is unavailable as it is not captured centrally. These arrangements are managed by individual work areas.

5. Non-ongoing employee costs come from the Employee Benefits fund. For further information on non-ongoing employees, please refer to SQ14-000914.

6. The department recruited 31 new ongoing employees in 2013-2014. For further information on recruitment of ongoing staff, please refer to Q.3 and Q.4 in ED0195_15 (SQ14-000869).

7. Nil.

SQ14-001949