

## Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

### QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Budget Estimates 2014-2015

#### Cross Portfolio

Department of Employment Question No. EM0123\_15

Senator Ludwig provided in writing.

#### Question

##### Conditions of Government Contracts and Agreements

Since 7 September 2013; 1. Do any contracts managed by the Department/Agency contain any limitations or restrictions on advocacy or criticising Government policy? If so, please name each contract. When was it formed or created? 2. What are the specific clauses and/or sections which state this, or in effect, create a limitation or restriction? 3. Do any agreements managed by the Department/Agency contain any limitations or restrictions on advocacy or criticisms of Government policy? If so, please name each agreement. When was it formed or created? 4. What are the specific clauses and/or sections which state this, or in effect, create a limitation or restriction? 5. For each of the contracts and agreements, are there any particular reason, such as genuine commercial in confidence information, for this restriction? 6. Have any changes to financial or resource support to services which advocate on behalf of groups or individuals in Australian society been made? If so, which groups? What was the change? 7. Has any consultation occurred between the Department/Agency and any individuals and/or community groups about these changes? If so, what consultation process was used? Was it public? If not, why not? Are public submissions available on a website? 8. If no consultation has occurred, why not?

#### Answer

In order to answer questions one to five the Department of Employment would be required to manually review each contract managed by the department of which there are hundreds. In any event, it would be very exceptional as there are no limitations or restrictions on advocacy in our standard agreements.

Changes to financial or resource support to services which advocate on behalf of groups or individuals in Australian society have occurred in relation to three business-affiliated services and two union-affiliated services.

The department decided to cease or reduce funding the particular projects for reasons including consistency with Government priorities and commitments and having regard to budgetary pressures.

Having regard to the nature of the arrangements, consultation occurred with the affected services.