

Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade
Additional Budget Estimates 2016-17; 1 March 2017
Answers to questions on notice from the Veterans' Affairs portfolio

Question 1

Outcome: 1 Program: Australian War Memorial

Topic: SACE visitors

(FADT Hansard Proof 1 March 2017, p 102)

Senator GALLACHER asked:

CHAIR: Thank you, Dr Nelson. On the Spirit of Anzac Centenary Experience, can you give us an update including, if on notice, the number of visitors who have been through in the different locations?

Answer

To the close of the Spirit of Anzac Centenary Experience travelling exhibition in Newcastle on 4 April 2017, a total of 327,707 visitors have attended the travelling exhibition. Attendance at each of the 22 locations visited to date is in the table below. The remaining location in the tour itinerary is Sydney.

Spirit of Anzac Centenary Experience Tour Itinerary

2015	2016	2017
4-10 September Albury/Wodonga (Venue in Wodonga) 14,854 visitors	11-20 January Wollongong 11,807 visitors	11-16 January Eaton (Bunbury) 10,920 visitors
26 September–2 October Launceston 9,281 visitors	8-23 February Melbourne 22,177 visitors	30 January– 5 February Kalgoorlie-Boulder 5,662 visitors
14-20 October Hobart 11,927 visitors	8-20 March Adelaide 29,317 visitors	21-27 February Geelong 11,807 visitors
8-14 November Ballarat 8,530 visitors	26 April–1 May Tamworth 11,566 visitors	12-17 March Orange 11,048 visitors
26 November–2 December Bendigo 10,464 visitors	17-23 May Toowoomba 17,601 visitors	29 March- 4 April Newcastle 19,900 visitors
	17-30 June Brisbane 29,599 visitors	15-27 April Sydney
	25-31 July Mackay 14,857 visitors	

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	14-20 August Cairns 14,029 visitors	
	2-11 September Townsville 16,934 visitors	
	17-24 October Darwin 13,122 visitors	
	9-14 November Port Augusta 6,466 visitors	
	29 November–11 December Perth 25,839 visitors	

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Question 2

Outcome: 1 Program: Australian War Memorial

Topic: End of First World War Commemorations 2018

(FADT Hansard Proof 1 March 2017, p 103)

Senator BACK asked:

CHAIR: Before I go to Senator Fawcett, the presence of the Israeli Prime Minister in Sydney last week reminded me of the events at Beersheba on 31 October. I wonder to what extent the War Memorial is involved in that commemoratives process.

Dr Nelson: The Department of Veterans' Affairs is overseeing a major event which will commemorate Beersheba in October.

CHAIR: We will perhaps leave that to further discussion with—

Dr Nelson: We are providing some material for the interpretive centre that is being constructed there and we will also provide a commemorative service for Beersheba at the War Memorial at our last post. We will also bring for public display objects that we have to complement what is already in our First World War galleries.

CHAIR: I will put you on notice as well. That, of course, is the events leading up to commemorating the end of the First World War in 2018.

Answer

The Australian War Memorial will undertake a number of activities commemorating the centenary of events of the First World War.

In addition to the Memorial's Last Post ceremony marking the centenaries of significant battle anniversaries ([Appendix A](#)), there will be a program of public engagement activities approximately five weeks from October through to 11 November 2018. Detailed planning for this program is currently under development.

In mid to late October 2018, the Memorial will open an exhibition *Aftermath: the consequences of war* (working title) in the Memorial's Special Exhibition Gallery for a display period of approximately 12 months. The exhibition will focus on the aftermath and changes brought about by major conflicts in which Australia has been involved, commencing with the First World War.

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Appendix A – Last Post ceremonies for First World War centenary battles

2017

DATE	EVENT	SIGNIFICANCE & FORMAT
11 April	First Battle of Bullecourt	Centenary - 1917 Last Post ceremony
3 May	Second attack on Bullecourt	Centenary – 1917 Last Post ceremony
7 June	Battle of Messines	Centenary – 1917 Last Post ceremony
31 July	Third Battle of Ypres	Centenary – 1917 Last Post ceremony
20 September	Battle of Menin Road	Centenary – 1917
26 September	Battle of Polygon Wood	Last Post ceremony
4 October	Battle of Broodseinde	Centenary – 1917
9 October	Battle of Poelcappelle	Last Post ceremony
12 October	Battle of Passchendaele	Centenary – 1917
31 October	Battle of Beersheba	Last Post ceremony

2018

DATE	EVENT	SIGNIFICANCE & FORMAT
24-25 April	Second Battle of Villers-Bretonneux	Centenary – 1918 Last Post ceremony
4 July	Battle of Hamel	Centenary – 1918 Last Post ceremony
8 August	Battle of Amiens	Centenary – 1918 Last Post ceremony
19 September	Battle of Megiddo	Centenary – 1918 Last Post ceremony
29 September	Battle of Mont St Quentin Canal (final breaking of Hindenburg line)	Centenary – 1918 Last Post ceremony
5 October	Battle of Montbrehain	Centenary – 1918 Last Post ceremony
11 November	Armistice of the First World War	Centenary – 1918 Last Post ceremony

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Question 3

Outcome: 1 Program: Australian War Memorial

Topic: Ministerial Functions

(Written Question on Notice)

Senator BILYK asked:

In relation to any functions or official receptions hosted by Ministers or Assistant Ministers in the portfolio since 1 January 2016, can the following please be provided:

- a) List of functions;
- b) List of attendees including departmental officials and members of the Minister's family or personal staff;
- c) Function venue;
- d) Itemised list of costs (GST inclusive);
- e) Details of any food served;
- f) Details of any wines or champagnes served including brand and vintage; and
- g) Details of any entertainment provided.

Answer

There have been no Memorial functions or official receptions hosted by the Minister or Assistant Ministers since 1 January 2016.

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Question 4

Outcome: 1 Program: Australian War Memorial

Topic: Vacancies

(Written Question on Notice)

Senator BILYK asked:

Please provide a list of all statutory, board and legislated office vacancies and other significant appointments vacancies within the portfolio, including length of time vacant and current acting arrangements.

Answer

There are no statutory, board and legislated office vacancies, or other significant appointments vacancies at the Australian War Memorial.

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Question 5

Outcome: 1 Program: Australian War Memorial

Topic: Consultancies

(Written Question on Notice)

Senator BILYK asked:

Please provide an itemised list of costs (GST inclusive) for spending in calendar year 2016 on external consultants/service providers in the following categories please be provided:

- a) social media;
- b) photography;
- c) graphic design;
- d) web design;
- e) electronic communications;
- f) acting or public speaking training;
- g) ergonomics.

Answer

- a) \$4,750
- b) \$19,250
- c) \$76,519
- d) \$286,596
- e) nil
- f) \$8,896
- g) \$28,090

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Question 6

Outcome: 1 Program: Australian War Memorial

Topic: Cost of Gifts

(Written Question on Notice)

Senator BILYK asked:

- a) What was the total cost (GST inclusive) of all gifts purchased for use by Ministers in the portfolio in calendar year 2016?
- b) Can an itemised list of gifts and costs thereof (GST inclusive) please be provided?
- c) Which Minister gave each gift?
- d) Who was the recipient of each gift?

Answer

a-d) There have been no gifts purchased by the Australian War Memorial for use by Minister's in the portfolio in the 2016 calendar year.

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Question 7

Outcome: 3 Program: 3.1

Topic: Budget expenditure – Villers-Bretonneux
(FADT Hansard Proof 1 March 2017, p136-137)

Senator GALLACHER asked:

Senator GALLACHER: Yes. So we got some information some time ago and we looked at the budget expenditure for 2017-18 and 2016-17. So \$2.1 million in 2016-17 is to be spent managing the project?

Major Gen. Chalmers: I would have to take that on notice. I only have the broad figures in front of me. So, unless my colleague has those detailed figures—

Senator GALLACHER: I will just go back. In 2015-16, there was \$1.4 million, rising to 2.1 million in 2016-17. My line of questioning then was: how much are you spending on airfares flying up and down to manage the contract? On notice, could you please provide that completed expenditure?

Major Gen. Chalmers: Certainly, Senator.

Senator GALLACHER: Thank you.

Answer

2015-16: \$28,057.71

2016-17: \$29,412.93

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Question 8

Outcome: all Program: all

Topic: Advertising and information campaigns

(Written Question on Notice)

Senator BILYK asked:

- a) How much has the Department spent on advertising and information campaigns since 1 October 2016 (GST inclusive)? Can a list of all Contract Notice IDs for the Austender website in relation to advertising and information campaign contracts please be provided?
- b) How much did the Department spend on Facebook advertising or sponsored Facebook posts in calendar year 2016 (GST inclusive)?
- c) How much did the Department spend on Google adwords advertising in calendar year 2016 (GST inclusive)?

Answer

- a) The Department spent \$42,141.02 (GST inclusive) on advertising and information campaigns from 1 October 2016 to 31 January 2017. There is no current Contract Notice ID for the Austender website in relation to advertising and information because the Department utilises the Commonwealth's Master Media Planning and Placement Agency, Dentsu Mitchell, for all media buys. Through this arrangement, Dentsu Mitchell places the Department's advertising in various media outlets. The contract is administered by the Department of Finance.
- b) The Department spent \$15,940.66 (GST inclusive) on Facebook advertising and sponsored Facebook posts in the 2016 calendar year.
- c) Nil.

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Question 9

**Outcome: all Program: all
Topic: Market research
(Written Question on Notice)**

Senator BILYK asked:

- a) How much did the Department spend on market research in calendar year 2016 (GST inclusive)?
- b) Can a list of all market research contracts entered into please be provided, together with the Austender Contract Notice number?
- c) What was the purpose of this market research?
- d) Did it relate to an advertising or information campaign? If so, which campaign?

Answer

- a) In the 2016 calendar year, the Department's expenditure on market research was \$250,501.
- b) Refer chart below.
- c) Refer chart below.
- d) Nil. None of the market research conducted related to advertising or information campaigns.

Organisation	Austender Contract Notice Number	Purpose of market research	Amount (incl GST)
<i>Essence Communications Pty Ltd</i>	CN3380708	Essence Communications was selected through a tender process to undertake research to inform the development of the Sir John Monash Centre marketing approach.	\$82,500
<i>ORIMA Research</i>	CN3400679	DVA conducted its biennial Client Satisfaction Survey in 2016. This survey is designed to track client satisfaction and provide evidence-based strategic information and advice to the Department.	\$168,001
TOTAL			\$250,501*

*Rounded to the nearest dollar.

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Question 10

Outcome: all Program: all
Topic: Media and Public Relations
(Written Question on Notice)

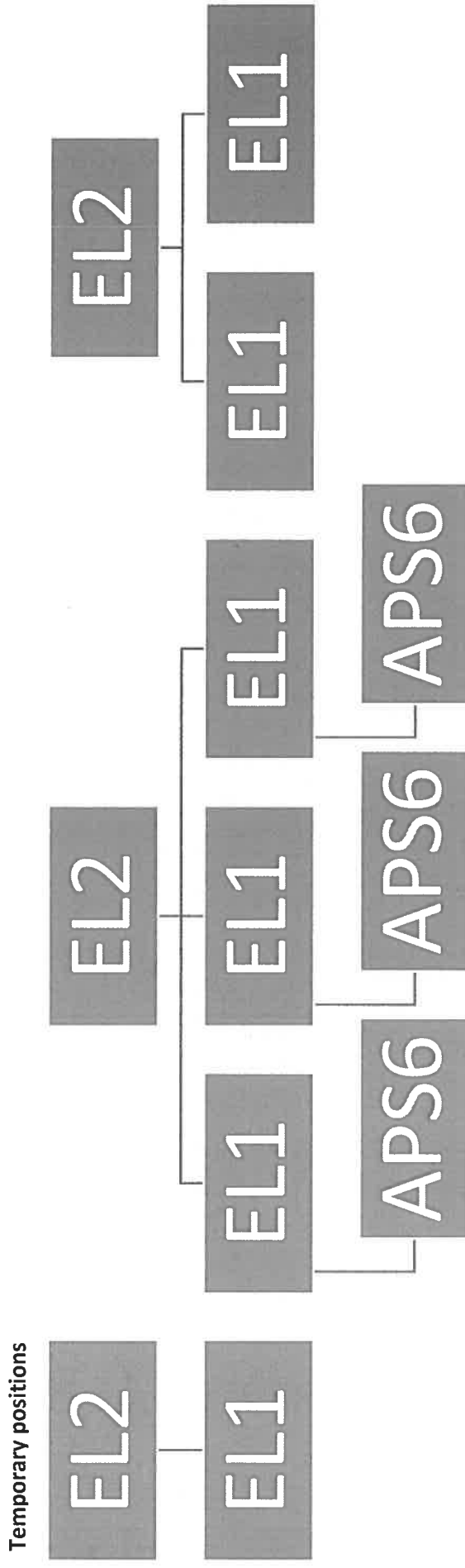
Senator BILYK asked:

- a) How much has the Department spent on media monitoring since 1 October 2016 (GST inclusive)?
- b) Can a list of all Contract Notice IDs for the Austender website in relation to media monitoring contracts please be provided?
- c) How many media or public relations advisers are employed in the Department? At what APS level (eg EL2, APS5) is each staff member employed?
- d) Can an organisational chart for the relevant area of the Department please be provided?
- e) What was the total cost of employing relevant staff in calendar year 2016 (please provide a global figure)?

Answer

- a) The Department has spent \$125,958.25 (GST inclusive) for the period 1 October 2016 to 31 January 2017.
- b) The only Contract Notice ID the Department has in relation to media monitoring on the Austender website is CND002957.
- c) The Communications Branch manages the Department's internal and external communication activities. During the 2016 calendar year, the Communications Branch engaged 14 staff whose duties included media or public relations work:
 - 4 x EL2 (1 on maternity leave)
 - 7 x EL1 (1 on maternity leave)
 - 3 x APS6 (1 on maternity leave)
- d) The organisational chart for media and public relations staff in the Communications Branch in the 2016 calendar year is attached. It should be noted that this reflects the actual structure rather than the number of people or full time equivalents who have held positions. Several contract staff were engaged during the year to backfill vacant and/or maternity leave positions and a number of staff are part-time. The chart includes temporary positions.
- e) The global figure for employing relevant staff in the 2016 calendar year is \$1,436,927.69 (\$1,072,174.89 GST exclusive – staff salaries and \$364,752.80 GST inclusive for contracted staff salaries). This includes the salaries for three officers on maternity leave during 2016.

Media and Public Relations Staff Organisational Chart



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Question 11

Outcome: all Program: all

Topic: 2016 Election Commitments

(FADT Hansard Proof 1 March 2017, p 130)

Senator GALLACHER asked:

Senator GALLACHER: We will not pursue that any further. This next question probably needs to be taken on notice. The government made a number of election commitments prior to the 2016 federal election. Can the department provide a breakdown, on notice, of the government's election commitments, including any deadlines for delivery and the legislated requirements that will be necessitated by way of either regulation or legislation to implement those election commitments?

Mr Lewis: Certainly.

Senator GALLACHER: I am advised here that you have probably had some practice with that because Senator Ronaldson asked for it when he was in opposition. So there might be a template there somewhere.

Mr Lewis: We are happy to assist.

Answer

The Government's election commitments from the 2016 federal election were:

Name of election commitment	Deadline for Delivery	Legislated requirements needed to implement the election commitment
Supporting Veterans with mental health concerns – Phoenix Centenary of Anzac Centre	Ongoing Contract expected to be signed following the disallowable period, which ends mid-August 2017.	A legislative amendment is required to add the grant item to Schedule 1AB of the <i>Financial Framework (Supplementary Powers) Regulations 1997</i> . The disallowable instrument is expected to be tabled in the sitting week commencing 8 May 2017 and will come in to effect in mid-August 2017.
Supporting Veterans' Mental Health – VVCS eligibility extension	Delivered - 1 April 2017	Not applicable

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Name of election commitment	Deadline for Delivery	Legislated requirements needed to implement the election commitment
Supporting Younger Veterans – Grants Program	Delivered – 4 May 2017	Not applicable
Supporting Female Veterans – Female Veterans' Policy Forum	Ongoing	Not applicable
Streamline Claims Process – Increase claim amount for medical reports	Delivered - 1 April 2017	Changes to the Veterans' Entitlements Regulations 1986 was required
Prime Minister's Employment Forum (Host a Forum)	Delivered - 17 November 2016	Not applicable
Employment – Veteran Employment	Ongoing	Changes to the Financial Framework (Supplementary Powers) Regulation 1997 was required
Homelessness – State and Territory Consultation	Ongoing	Not applicable
Homelessness – Data collection and study	Ongoing	Not applicable
Supporting Veterans' concerns on Mefloquine	Ongoing	Not applicable
Creating a better veterans' transition process	30 June 2017	Not applicable
Consultative Forum – Claims Process	Ongoing	Not applicable
Annual Ministerial Statement	31 December 2017	Not applicable

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Name of election commitment	Deadline for Delivery	Legislated requirements needed to implement the election commitment
Commemorations – Coral Balmoral	Ongoing	Not applicable
Commemorations - Battle of Long Tan and the Vietnam War	Delivered – August 2016	Not applicable
Commemorations – Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum (Thailand)	30 June 2018	Not applicable

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Question 12

Outcome: all Program: all

Topic: 2016 Election Commitments attainability
(FADT Hansard Proof 1 March 2017, p 130)

Senator GALLACHER asked:

Senator GALLACHER: Also, can the department advise which of these commitments have been met and which have not; what financial impacts these have had, or will have; and whether there are any commitments, in the department's view, which are unattainable by way of budgetary requirements or legislation/regulatory provisions.

Senator Payne: I am not sure the department will provide an opinion as such on that, Senator, but—

Senator GALLACHER: I am sure we will get an appropriate response on those.

Senator Payne: the department will respond as best as they can.

Answer

Name of election commitment	Been met/have not been met	Financial impacts
Supporting Veterans with mental health concerns – Phoenix Centenary of Anzac Centre	In progress	\$6.0 million
Supporting Veterans' Mental Health – VVCS eligibility extension	Has been met	\$3.2 million over 4 years (made available through MYEFO funding)
Supporting Younger Veterans – Grants Program	In progress	\$4 million over the forward estimates.
Supporting Female Veterans – Female Veterans' Policy Forum	In progress	\$600,000
Streamline Claims Process – Increase claim amount for medical reports	In progress	\$1.1 million over the forward estimates.
Prime Minister's Employment Forum (Host a Forum)	Has been met	\$92,387 in 2016/17.
Employment – Veteran Employment	Has been met	\$2.72 million
Homelessness – State and Territory Consultation	Has been met	Met from existing resources
Homelessness – Data collection and study	In progress	\$650,000 (made available through MYEFO funding)

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Name of election commitment	Been met/have not been met	Financial impacts
Supporting Veterans' concerns on Mefloquine	In progress	\$18,880 (made available through MYEFO funding)
Creating a better veterans' transition process	In progress	Met from existing resources
Consultative Forum – Claims Process	In progress	Met from existing resources
Annual Ministerial Statement	In progress	Met/meeting from existing resources
Commemorations – Coral Balmoral	In progress	Nil
Commemorations - Battle of Long Tan and the Vietnam War	Has been met	Nil
Commemorations – Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum (Thailand)	In progress	Nil

The Department does not consider it appropriate to comment on whether there are any commitments which are unattainable by way of budgetary requirement or legislation/regulatory provisions.

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Question 13

Outcome: all Program: all
Topic: Ministerial Functions
 (Written Question on Notice)

Senator BILYK asked:

In relation to any functions or official receptions hosted by Ministers or Assistant Ministers in the portfolio since 1 January 2016, can the following please be provided:

- a) List of functions;
- b) List of attendees including departmental officials and members of the Minister's family or personal staff;
- c) Function venue;
- d) Itemised list of costs (GST inclusive);
- e) Details of any food served;
- f) Details of any wines or champagnes served including brand and vintage; and
- g) Details of any entertainment provided.

Answer

a) - d)

List of Function	List of Attendees	Function Venue	Itemised List of Costs (GST Inclusive)
The Veterans Ministers' Roundtable`	46 attendees comprising Commonwealth State and Territory Veterans' Affairs Ministers, accompanying departmental staff and Ministerial staff.	Old Parliament House and New Parliament House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Venue hire - \$385 (GST inclusive) • Catering - \$7,233 (GST inclusive) • Other (data projector, lectern and microphone) - \$300 (GST inclusive)
Luncheon for the 75 th Anniversary of the Siege of Tobruk	Approximately 190 attendees. The list of attendees range from ex-service organisations to other external parties with an interest in veteran and commemorative activities.	Reg Saunders Gallery, Australian War Memorial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Western Courtyard Gallery - \$750 (GST inclusive) • Catering - \$4,085 (GST inclusive) • Sunday Cleaning - \$872.37 (GST inclusive) • Sunday Security - \$656 (GST inclusive) • Sunday Surcharge - \$1,634 (GST inclusive)

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List of Function	List of Attendees	Function Venue	Itemised List of Costs (GST Inclusive)
Luncheon for the 75 th Anniversary of Battle of Greece and Crete	Approximately 100 attendees. The list of attendees range from ex-service organisations to other external parties with an interest in veteran and commemorative activities.	Reg Saunders Gallery, Australian War Memorial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gallery Hire - \$650 (GST inclusive) • Catering - \$2,150 (GST inclusive) • Cleaning - \$196 (GST inclusive) • Security - \$208 (GST inclusive)
Reception for the 50 th Anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan	646 attendees. The list of attendees range from ex-service organisations to other external parties with an interest in veteran and commemorative activities.	Great Hall, Australian Parliament House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great Hall set up - \$6,000 (GST inclusive) • Banquets Reception Food - \$38,700 (GST inclusive) • Banquets Reception Beverages - \$23,850 (GST inclusive) • Banquets Cleaning Charge - \$400 (GST inclusive) • Banquets Security Charge - \$4,116.84 (GST inclusive) • Banquet Reception Beverages (Pre-event) - \$1,812 (GST inclusive) • Staging and event infrastructure - \$32,335.60 (GST inclusive) • John Schumann and accompanist - \$5,500.00 (GST inclusive)
Australian Korean War Veterans Mission Farewell Dinner	65 attendees. The list of attendees range from ex-service organisations to other external parties with an interest in veteran and commemorative activities.	Blackwattle Function Room, Parkroyal Hotel, Darling Harbour, Sydney, NSW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food & Beverages - \$9,680 (GST inclusive) • Staging and audio visual - \$2,773.95 (GST inclusive)
			TOTAL = \$144,287.76 (GST inclusive)

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e) - g) The time and effort to accurately provide this information would be an unreasonable diversion of resources.

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Question 14

Outcome: all Program: all
Topic: Corporate Functions
(Written Question on Notice)

Senator BILYK asked:

In relation to expenditure on any departmental functions or official receptions etc since 1 January 2016, can the following please be provided:

- a) List of functions;
- b) List of attendees;
- c) Function venue;
- d) Itemised list of costs (GST inclusive);
- e) Details of any food served;
- f) Details of any wines or champagnes served including brand and vintage; and
- g) Details of any entertainment provided.

Answer

- a) The expenditure relates to official hospitality for meetings and forums that involved external parties, in particular ex-service organisations to other external parties with an interest in veteran and commemorative activities.
- b) The list of attendees range from ex-service organisations to other external parties with an interest in veteran and commemorative activities.
- c) Total cost of venue hires are \$159,378.03 (GST inclusive). The time and effort to accurately provide the list of function venues would be an unreasonable diversion of resources.
- d) The total cost of department functions/official receptions for these purposes is \$241,916.48 comprising \$159,378.03 for venues and \$82,538.45 for provisioning.
- e-g) The time and effort to accurately provide this information would be an unreasonable diversion of resources.

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Question 15

Outcome: all Program: all

Topic: Cost of Plants and Gardens

(Written Question on Notice)

Senator BILYK asked:

- a) What was the total cost (GST inclusive) of acquiring and maintaining indoor plants for all departmental premises in calendar year 2016?
- b) What was the total cost (GST inclusive) of external gardens and landscaping for all departmental premises in calendar year 2016?
- c) What was the total cost (GST inclusive) of acquiring and maintaining indoor plants for ministerial offices in calendar year 2016? Please provide separate figures for each Minister's office in the portfolio, covering ministerial offices both at Parliament House and elsewhere.

Answer

- a) \$5,700 inclusive of GST.
- b) Nil.
- c) Nil.

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Question 16

Outcome: all Program: all
Topic: Cost of Subscriptions
(Written Question on Notice)

Senator BILYK asked:

- a) What was the total cost (GST inclusive) of subscriptions to print and online news services, newspapers, magazines, journals and periodicals etc in calendar year 2016 for the Department? Please provide a complete list of each service to which the Department subscribed.
- b) What was the total cost (GST inclusive) of subscriptions to print and online news services, newspapers, magazines, journals and periodicals etc in calendar year 2016 for Ministers in the portfolio? Please provide a complete list of each service to which ministerial offices subscribed.

Answer

- a) Departmental expenditure on subscriptions to print and online news services, newspapers, magazines, journals, periodicals etc was \$336 038.21 for the 2016 calendar year. This includes services provided to the Minister's office. This amount includes services for online news services including media monitoring, which captures and interprets data from mainstream media outlets, online news sources and user-generated content sources and subscriptions, newspapers, magazines and journals, including online publications. The Department's ledger does not further distinguish between the different types of services. To identify each type of service would be too resource intensive.
- b) Please refer to part A.

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Question 17

Outcome: all Program: all

Topic: Cost of Gifts

(Written Question on Notice)

Senator BILYK asked:

- a) What was the total cost (GST inclusive) of all gifts purchased for use by departmental officials in calendar year 2016?
- b) Can an itemised list of gifts and costs thereof (GST inclusive) please be provided?
- c) Who was the recipient of each gift?
- d) For what purpose was each gift given?
- e) What was the total cost (GST inclusive) of all gifts purchased for use by Ministers in the portfolio in calendar year 2016?
- f) Can an itemised list of gifts and costs thereof (GST inclusive) please be provided?
- g) Which Minister gave each gift?
- h) Who was the recipient of each gift?
- i) For what purpose was each gift given?

Answer

- a) The total cost of all gifts purchased for use by departmental officials in the portfolio in calendar year 2016 was \$495.61.
- b), c) and d)
 - \$315.61 (no GST applicable, overseas transaction) was spent on New Years' Cards, which were given to officials and key stakeholders in Turkey. The purpose of this gift was for public diplomacy and relationship building.
 - \$180.00 (GST inclusive) was spent on books from the Australian War Memorial, which were given to the Governor and Deputy Governor of Canakkale Province. The purpose of the gift was to show appreciation of the Governor's contribution to Anzac Day commemorations as part of trilateral meetings.
- e) The total cost of all gifts purchased for use by Ministers in the portfolio in calendar year 2016 was \$684.00 (GST inclusive).
- f), g), h) and i) The time and effort to accurately provide answers to this comprehensive list of questions would be an unreasonable diversion of resources.

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Question 18

Outcome: all Program: all

Topic: Water Coolers

(Written Question on Notice)

Senator BILYK asked:

- a) What was the total cost (GST inclusive) of providing water coolers at departmental premises in calendar year 2016? Please provide a breakdown of costs for acquiring and maintaining/resupplying water coolers.
- b) What was the total cost (GST inclusive) of providing water coolers to ministerial offices in calendar year 2016? Please provide a breakdown of costs for acquiring and maintaining/resupplying water coolers.

Answer

- a) The total cost of providing water coolers at departmental premises in calendar year 2016 was \$9,706. The breakdown of costs for acquiring and maintaining/resupplying water coolers is as follows:

State	Cost Inc of GST calendar year 2016
TAS	293
NSW	764
QLD	4,820
VIC	2,925
WA	0
SA	350
NT	104
ACT	450
	\$9,706

- b) Nil.

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Question 19

Outcome: all Program: all

Topic: Cost of Snacks

(Written Question on Notice)

Senator BILYK asked:

- a) What was the total cost (GST inclusive) of supplying fruit and other snacks at departmental premises in calendar year 2016?
- b) What was the total cost (GST inclusive) of supplying fruit and other snacks to ministerial offices in calendar year 2016? Please provide a breakdown of the costs for each separate ministerial office, covering both offices at Parliament House and elsewhere.

Answer

a - b) Due to financial reporting requirements, the Department is unable to provide a figure for the provision of fruit and other snacks at departmental premises and ministerial office premises for the calendar year 2016. The time and effort to accurately source a comprehensive figure would be an unreasonable diversion of resources.

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Question 20

Outcome: all Program: all

Topic: Coffee Machines

(Written Question on Notice)

Senator BILYK asked:

Can an itemised list of coffee machines at departmental premises please be provided including
 (i) make and model;
 (ii) purchase or lease cost;
 (iii) ongoing maintenance costs;
 (iv) ongoing cost of supplying coffee and other consumables?

Answer

The following coffee machines are located at departmental premises.

Office	Make	Model	Purchase Cost	Ongoing Maintenance Cost	Ongoing Supply Cost
Canberra	Nespresso	Gemini CS220	\$1,421	Nil	Nil*
Darwin	Nespresso	EN266BAE	\$299	Nil	Nil
Melbourne	Krea	Necta	\$4,475	\$300pa	\$650pa
Melbourne (VVCS)	Lioness	H4	\$2,995	\$300pa	\$835pa
Sydney	Nespresso	CS100	\$1,545	Nil	Nil*

*Business areas purchase consumables if and when they access the machine for meetings or events.

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Question 21

Outcome: all Program: all

Topic: Mobile devices

(Written Question on Notice)

Senator BILYK asked:

- a) How many mobile telephones are currently on issue to departmental staff?
- b) Can an itemised list showing make and model please be provided?
- c) How many new mobile phones were purchased by the Department in calendar year 2016?
- d) What was the total cost (GST inclusive) of purchasing mobile telephones for departmental staff in calendar year 2016?
- e) How many mobile telephones had to be replaced due to damage in calendar year 2016? What was the cost of replacement (GST inclusive)?
- f) How many mobile telephones were reported lost or stolen in calendar year 2016? What was the cost of replacement (GST inclusive)?
- g) How many iPads/tablets are currently on issue to departmental staff?
- h) Can an itemised list showing make and model please be provided?
- i) How many new iPads /tablets were purchased by the Department in calendar year 2016?
- j) What was the total cost (GST inclusive) of purchasing ipads/tablets for departmental staff in calendar year 2016?
- k) How many iPads tablets had to be replaced due to damage in calendar year 2016? What was the cost of replacement (GST inclusive)?
- l) How many iPads /tablets were reported lost or stolen in calendar year 2016? What was the cost of replacement (GST inclusive)?

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Answer

a) 286.

b) The following tables provides the make and model of all 286 issued devices and the two pool stock (not yet issued) devices:

Make	Model	QTY
Apple	A1429 (Apple iPhone 5)	14
Apple	A1524 (Apple iPhone 6 Plus)	10
Apple	A1530 (Apple iPhone 5s)	83
Apple	A1586 (Apple iPhone 6)	9
Apple	A1687 (Apple iPhone 6S Plus)	5
Apple	A1688 (Apple iPhone 6S)	2
Apple	A1723 (Apple iPhone SE)	6
Apple	A1778 (Apple iPhone 7)	1
Apple	(Apple iPhone 4)	1
Apple	(Apple iPhone 4S)	2
BlackBerry	STL100 (Blackberry Z10)	1
HTC	HTC Velocity	1
HTC	PJ46110 (HTC One XL)	1
Huawei	Huawei Ascend Y530	1
LG	D295F (LG L Fino)	1
LG	K500K (Telstra Signature Enhanced)	5
LG	P690F (LG Optimus Spirit)	1
LG	TU550	7
Microsoft	Lumia 532	1
Microsoft	Lumia 640	3
Motorola	XT1068 INDR000145	1
Nokia	2730C	1
Nokia	6700S	1
Nokia	7230	1
Nokia	Lumia 920	1
Nokia	C2-01	1
Nokia	C3-01	5
Nokia	C5-00.3	76
Nokia	Lumia 520	30
Samsung	Samsung SM-N9005	1
Samsung	Samsung GT-I9100	1
Samsung	Samsung Galaxy S II	1
Samsung	Samsung Galaxy Note II	1
Samsung	Samsung SM-G900I	1
Samsung	Samsung SM-J100Y	1

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Samsung	Samsung GT-S7392	1
Samsung	Samsung GT-I9305T	1
Samsung	Samsung C5220	1
Samsung	Samsung SGH-A561	1
Samsung	S7	1
Sony Ericsson	Z750I	1
ZTE	TELSTRA TOUGH TM 2	1
ZTE	T815	1
ZTE	BLADE Q LUX	1
ZTE	T90	1
	Total	288

c) 22.

d) \$22,246.

e) Five mobile telephones required repair in 2016 at a total cost of \$1,675.

f) One iPhone was reported lost but later found by the staff member.

g) 130.

h) The following tables provides the make and model of all 130 issued devices:

Make	Model	QTY
Apple	Apple iPad (WIFI+3G)	4
Apple	Apple iPad 2 (WIFI+3G)	10
Apple	Apple iPad 3 (WIFI+3G)	7
Apple	Apple iPad 4 (WIFI+Cellular)	49
Apple	Apple iPad Air (WIFI+Cellular)	53
Apple	Apple iPad Air 2 (WIFI+Cellular)	3
Apple	Apple iPad Mini 2 (WIFI+Cellular)	4
	Total	130

i) Five.

j) \$2,180.

k) None.

l) None.

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Question 22

Outcome: all Program: all
Topic: Stationary and paper
(Written Question on Notice)

Senator BILYK asked:

- a) How much did the Department spend on stationary and office supplies (excluding paper) in calendar year 2016 (GST inclusive)?
- b) How much did the Department spend on paper in calendar year 2016 (GST inclusive)?
- c) What brand of paper does the Department use?
- d) Is this paper Australian made?
- e) If no, why doesn't the Department buy Australian made paper?

Answer

- a) \$266,896 GST inclusive.
- b) \$160,133 GST inclusive.
- c) The Department currently purchases paper from the contracted supplier, Staples Pty Ltd. Department of Finance guidelines state that agencies are able to select the type of paper that best meets their business needs. These needs vary across the Department, so a range of brands are currently purchased.
- d) Not all paper supplied by Staples is made in Australia. The Department is moving toward ensuring that Australian made paper is purchased wherever practical.
- e) Refer to answer at c.

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Question 23

Outcome: all Program: all

Topic: Executive office

(Written Question on Notice)

Senator BILYK asked:

Have the furniture, fixtures or fittings of the Secretary's office, or the offices of any Deputy Secretaries, been upgraded since 1 October 2016? If so, can an itemised list of costs please be provided (GST inclusive)?

Answer

No works have been conducted in the Secretary's or Deputy Secretary's office since October 2016.

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Question 24

Outcome: all Program: all
Topic: Facilities upgrades
(Written Question on Notice)

Senator BILYK asked:

- a) Have the facilities of any of the Department's premises been upgraded since 1 October 2016, for example, staff room refurbishments, kitchen refurbishments, bathroom refurbishments, the purchase of any new fridges, coffee machines, or other kitchen equipment?
- b) If so, can a detailed description of the relevant facilities upgrade please be provided together with an itemised list of costs (GST inclusive)? Can any photographs of the upgraded facilities please be provided?

Answer

- a) Yes. The Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service (VVCS) Townsville had a minor refurbishment undertaken during that period.
- b) The refurbishment consisted of upgrades to the counselling suites, kitchen, family counselling room and meeting area.

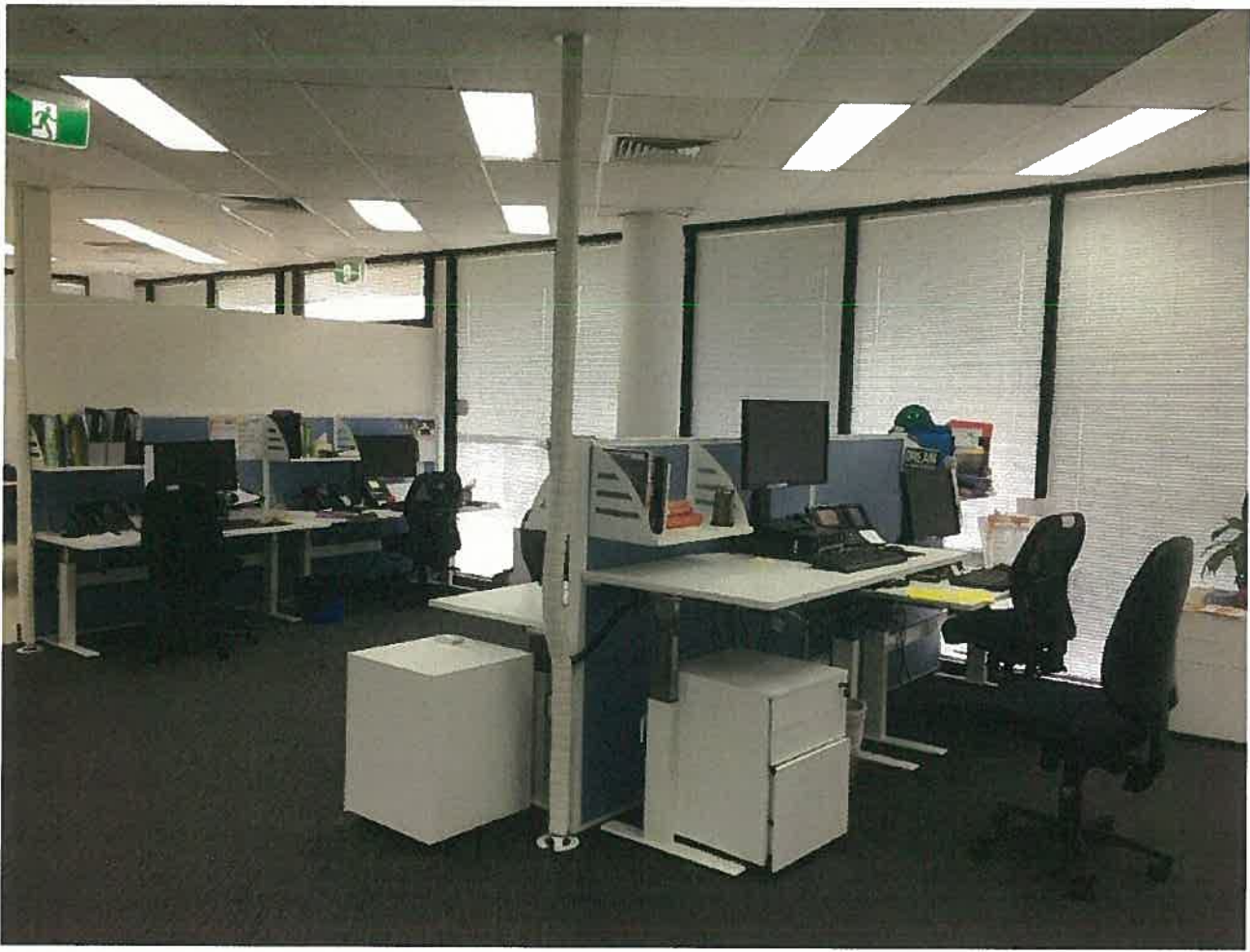
The breakdown of costs are at Attachment A. Photos are at Attachment B-D.

ATTACHMENT A

Project Name		Description		Total on Invoices as issued WITH GST
Townsville WVCS minor works		Refurb WVCS Townsville 340 Ross River Road		
Product	Item	Inv Total Inc	GST	
Architects	Design, Documentation, Tendering, Contract Management	\$	1,771	
Construction	Progress Claim 1	\$	92,328	
	Progress Claim 2	\$	122,658	
	Progress Claim 3	\$	89,256	
Loose Furniture	Loose Furniture	\$	9,894	
AV equipment	Ceiling projector and screen set up	\$	2,419	
Electrical and Data	Relocation/set up of computers Stage 2	\$	704	
	Relocation/setup of computers Stage 1	\$	1,716	
				\$ 320,746







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Question 25

Outcome: all Program: all

Topic: Vacancies

(Written Question on Notice)

Senator BILYK asked:

Please provide a list of all statutory, board and legislated office vacancies and other significant appointments vacancies within the portfolio, including length of time vacant and current acting arrangements.

Answer

The response relates to a period as at to 31 January 2017.

Title of Board	Number of Vacancies	Length of Time Vacant	Acting Arrangements
Prime Ministerial Advisory Council on Veterans' Mental Health	4	Over 7 months (since 18 June 2016)	Nil

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Question 26

Outcome: all Program: all

Topic: Redundancies

(Written Question on Notice)

Senator BILYK asked:

- a) How many staff were made redundant in calendar year 2016?
- b) How many were voluntary redundancies?
- c) How many were forced redundancies?
- d) What was the total cost of all redundancies (expressed as a single global figure)?
- e) Have any staff made redundant in calendar year 2016 subsequently carried out work for the Department as a contractor? If so, please provide an itemised list of relevant contracts and related Austender Contract Notice numbers.

Answer

- a) In the period 1 January 2016 to 31 December 2016, there were 29 voluntary redundancies.
- b) There were 29 voluntary redundancies.
- c) There were no forced redundancies.
- d) The total cost of the 29 voluntary redundancies was \$3,479,680.49, which includes \$1,323,851.06 of paid out recreation leave and long service leave entitlements.
- e) No.

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Question 27

Outcome: all Program: all

Topic: Websites

(Written Question on Notice)

Senator BILYK asked:

- a) What were the top 20 most utilised (by data sent and received) unique domain names accessed by departmental staff in calendar year 2016?
- b) What were the top 20 most accessed (by number of times accessed) unique domain names accessed by departmental staff in calendar year 2016?

Answer

a-b) Due to the nature of this question, it would be an unnecessary diversion of resources to supply this information.

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Question 28

Outcome: all Program: all

Topic: Consultancies

(Written Question on Notice)

Senator BILYK asked:

Please provide an itemised list of costs (GST inclusive) for spending in calendar year 2016 on external consultants/service providers in the following categories please be provided:

- (i) social media;
- (ii) photography;
- (iii) graphic design;
- (iv) web design
- (v) electronic communications
- (vi) acting or public speaking training;
- (vii) ergonomics.

Answer

i-vii) DVA does not collect data broken down in the format as requested. It would be very resource intensive to assemble this data.

The value of contracts including consultancies can be found in the DVA Annual Report at Appendix D: Advertising and Market Research (page 257) and on AusTender (www.tenders.gov.au).

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Question 29

Outcome: all Program: all
Topic: iTunes/Android
(Written Question on Notice)

Senator BILYK asked:

- a) Does the Department have an iTunes account? If so, what was the total expenditure on iTunes in calendar year 2016 (GST inclusive)? What applications/subscriptions/services purchased through iTunes in calendar year 2016?
- b) Does the Department have an Android account? If so, what was the total expenditure on Android in calendar year 2016 (GST inclusive)? What applications/subscriptions/services purchased through Android in calendar year 2016?
- c) Do any ministerial offices in the portfolio have an iTunes account? If so, what was the total expenditure on iTunes in calendar year 2016 (GST inclusive)? Please provide separate figures for each Minister. What applications/subscriptions/services purchased through iTunes in calendar year 2016?
- d) Do any ministerial offices have an Android account? If so, what was the total expenditure on Android in calendar year 2016 (GST inclusive)? Please provide separate figures for each Minister. What applications/subscriptions/services purchased through Android in calendar year 2016?

Answer

- a) Yes, the Department has iTunes accounts. There was no expenditure against these accounts and no applications/subscriptions/services purchased in calendar year 2016.
- b) Yes, the Department has an Android account. There was no expenditure against this account and no applications/subscriptions/services purchased in calendar year 2016.
- c) The office for the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, the Hon. Dan Tehan MP, does not have an iTunes account.
- d) The office for the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, the Hon. Dan Tehan MP, does not have an Android account.

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Question 30

Outcome: all Program: all

Topic: Flights

(Written Question on Notice)

Senator BILYK asked:

What was the Department's total expenditure on flights for departmental staff in calendar year 2016 (GST inclusive)?

Answer

In calendar year 2016, the Department spent \$3,532,655 (GST inclusive) on flights. This figure includes booking fees.

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Question 31

Outcome: all Program: all
Topic: Ground transport
(Written Question on Notice)

Senator BILYK asked:

What was the Department's total expenditure on the following categories of ground transport in calendar year 2016 (GST inclusive):

- (i) Taxi hire;
- (ii) Limousine hire;
- (iii) Private hire car; and
- (iv) Ridesharing services.

Answer

The Department's total expenditure for the indicated categories of ground transport in the 2016 calendar year was \$607,242 (GST inclusive). Whilst it is not possible to accurately break down this expenditure by the categories listed, the vast majority of the expenditure was for taxi hire.

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Question 32

Outcome: all Program: all

Topic: Costs of Legal Services

(FADT Hansard Proof 1 March 2017, p 125)

Senator ROBERTS asked:

Senator ROBERTS: That is what I would have guessed and staff would have guessed as well. How much money has DVA spent on lawyers and legal action in the last year and also over the last 10 years?

Ms Spiers: I can answer the question about the last full financial year and half-year to date for you. Over the last 10 years I would have to take on notice.

Senator ROBERTS: Okay.

Ms Spiers: In terms of half-year to date: we break this up as we are required to under the legal services direction, because we have to report this annually to the Office of Legal Services Coordination. External legal costs expenditure half-year to date is \$3,626,593.03. I am not sure about the 3c though!

Answer

- a) In 2015-16 the Department spent \$8.16 million on external legal services which included disbursements costs (such as additional medical reports, specialist attendance of witnesses and engaging counsel). This expenditure related to a range of legal services including general advising, procurement, contracting and litigation issues. In 2015-16, the total internal legal services expenditure for direct salary and overhead costs of the DVA legal branch was \$2.46 million. Therefore, the total legal expenditure for 2015-16 was \$10.62 million
- b) Over the last 10 years, the Department's total legal expenditure was approximately \$ 94.11 million

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Question 33

Outcome: all Program: all

Topic: Policy and implementation feedback

(Written Question on Notice)

Senator GALLACHER asked:

- a) Has the Department received any feedback from stakeholders that relevant DVA legislation and current DVA policy implementation and advice often run contradictory to one another?
- b) Are any efforts been made to address and rectify this, if so what is been done?

Answer

- a) DVA has various channels through which it receives feedback from stakeholders, including consultative fora, client feedback mechanisms, and Ministerial and Departmental correspondence. From time to time, the Department is notified of concerns regarding legislation and policy implementation. While data is captured on broad categories of feedback received, systems do not allow reporting to the level of detail required to identify incidents of feedback on the consistency of legislation and policy implementation.
- b) Whenever DVA receives feedback, including on matters relating to legislation and policy implementation, it considers the issue and responds appropriately.

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Question 34

Outcome: all Program: all
Topic: Legal Costs for 2016
(Written Question on Notice)

Senator ROBERTS asked:

- a) What was the Department's total spend on external legal services (including services provided by the Australian Government Solicitor) (GST inclusive) for calendar year 2016?
- b) Can an itemised list of costs of each legal matter (GST inclusive) please be provided?
- c) Can a list of relevant Contract Notices published on Austender please be provided?

Answer

- a) In 2016 calendar year, the Department spent \$8.986 million on external legal services of which \$2.74 million were for services provided by the Australian Government Solicitor.
- b) It would be an unreasonable diversion of departmental resources to itemise costs for each legal matter.
- d) The details of DVA's contract notices are available under the **Reports** tab on AusTender (www.tenders.gov.au).

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Question 35

Outcome: 2 Program: 2.5

Topic: Suicide data matched to ComSuper data

(FADT Hansard Proof 1 March 2017, p 128)

Senator GALLACHER asked:

Senator GALLACHER: Just one observation on the recording of suicides: I have some interaction with the superannuation fund, and I presume everyone in Defence is now in a superannuation fund, and the death payments that are paid out are an easily accessible resource for knowing who got what and how they died. Do you interact with the superannuation fund?

Mr Lewis: We do.

Senator GALLACHER: Are those statistics not easily available? Why do you have to wait for a coronial inquest when we are paying out, on a regular basis, people's superannuation accounts, because their dependants need the money?

Ms Champion: Part of the work that the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare originally undertook when they were looking at the issue of suicides was to try to use the ComSuper data, but we might have to take it on notice to give you the details because I cannot quite recall—

Senator GALLACHER: I would appreciate it if you would, because—

Ms Champion: There were some technical details and issues about how they could match the ComSuper data with Defence.

Senator GALLACHER: I know of another industry that has a horrendous record of suicides, and they have that data from the superannuation fund that represents that industry.

Mr Lewis: You have reminded me that there was an issue there because that was the first way we tried to use this as a way of tracking these things. We will take it on notice and give you a proper answer.

Senator GALLACHER: Thank you. I just wanted to go to—oh, it is a political issue. All that goodwill is evaporating now.

Answer

In November 2014, the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) commissioned the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) to carry out a data matching exercise between deceased military superannuants from the database of Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation (CSC) (specifically those who served from 1972 and who died on or after 1 January 1990), and the National Death Index (NDI) for confirmed incidences of suicide.

In September 2015 following analysis of the data, AIHW advised DVA that there were significant limitations to the CSC data set for the purposes of the study, as it did not contain data for all serving and former serving Australian Defence Force (ADF) members. Owing to uncertainty about the number of people missing from the CSC data set, it was not possible to develop an understanding of the prevalence of suicide in the current and ex-service community utilising the CSC data set.

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A new approach to the data matching exercise commenced in late 2015. This approach matches certified suicide deaths from the NDI to the Department of Defence Personnel Management Key System, which contains information on all people who serve or have served in the ADF from 1 January 2001.

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Question 36

Outcome: 2 Program: 2.1

Topic: Service Provision in rural areas

(FADT Hansard Proof 1 March 2017, p 134)

Senator GALLACHER asked:

Senator GALLACHER: When we encourage people to go into rural areas they only do their time and move on. Is there anything you are doing—I know a lot of health departments are doing this—to encourage providers to extend services into regional areas? Is there any involvement from the department in encouraging people to provide services and meet the gaps?

Ms Campion: I am not aware of any specific initiatives. I might have to take that on notice. As you mentioned, the health department has a range of programs to encourage people to train and work in rural areas, but I am not sure that we have anything in particular.

Senator GALLACHER: I am happy for you to take it on notice.

Answer

DVA funds health services on behalf of veterans and provides financial assistance to veterans who need to travel to obtain treatment. However, DVA does not provide specific programs to encourage providers to extend services into regional areas as DVA does not have responsibility for regulation of health professionals.

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Question 37

Outcome: 2 Program: 2.1

Topic: Service Monitoring in Rural Areas
(FADT Hansard Proof 1 March 2017, p 135)

Senator GALLACHER asked:

Senator GALLACHER: I am happy for you to take it on notice. While you are there, is there any proactive monitoring of services across the country, particularly rural and regional areas, to identify shortcomings, particularly in respect of specialised treatment in rural and regional areas? Have you done that in the past?

Ms Campion: No. As I said, we do not have a particular program to do that. It is more an ongoing process of monitoring, as I said before, what the trends are in terms of requests we get for assistance for travel for treatment or for finding providers nearby who will accept our arrangements. It is an ongoing piece of work that we keep an eye on.

Answer

DVA's focus is on maximising veterans' access to existing services. This may involve some investigation of the availability of local specialist treatment but the emphasis is on actively assisting a veteran to attend the closest practical provider, with the travel to do so being funded by DVA.

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Question 38

Outcome: 2 Program: 2.5

Topic: Assistance Dogs

(FADT Hansard Proof 1 March 2017, p 112)

Senator KAKOSCHKE-MOORE asked:

Senator KAKOSCHKE-MOORE: Was I correct, then—and please correct me if I am wrong: has DVA approved an assistance dog to date?

Ms Foreman: Yes, for people who have sensory and physical conditions. We have a framework for that, yes.

Senator KAKOSCHKE-MOORE: Okay. Just in light of what was said, I wanted to double-check my understanding of the circumstances in which those approvals took place. So, there is more than one?

Ms Foreman: We might have to take that on notice. I am aware of one.

Senator Payne: Sorry—what was that question, Senator?

CHAIR: The question was on financial support for a veteran having, or the cost of, a dog, but it has been on the basis of a defined condition—

Ms Foreman: Sensory condition.

CHAIR: which clearly the dog assists with.

Senator Payne: I am interested in Senator Kakoschke-Moore's questioning. I might take it up with the Minister for Veterans' Affairs myself.

Senator KAKOSCHKE-MOORE: Thank you.

Questions on Notice:

Senator (KAKOSCHKE-MOORE) asked:

- a) Has DVA approved an assistance dog to date?
- b) What are the circumstances in which these approvals took place?

Answers

- a) Over the past fifteen years, DVA has supplied eight assistance dogs, including six guide dogs.
- b) DVA considers that assistance dogs fall within two distinct categories, either service dogs or companion dogs. Service dogs, which include guide and hearing dogs, are highly trained to assist people with mobility and sensory impairments and to support individuals with specific medical conditions to manage their activities of daily living.

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- Service dogs can be trained to perform a variety of tasks such as retrieving items, activating switches, opening and closing doors. To be considered for a service dog, veterans can initially apply in writing to DVA who will arrange for an evidence based health provider assessment to address the veteran's clinical needs.
- Companion dogs on the other hand, are those which are generally less skilled and provide companionship and emotional support. DVA does not fund companion dogs, such as for the treatment of mental health conditions, due to the lack of research-based evidence. However, DVA is both monitoring research being undertaken, and continuing to explore options concerning how companion dogs may be able to assist veterans with mental health conditions.

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Question 39

Outcome: 1 and 2 Program: N/A

Topic: 2010 Steering Committee into Veterans Health Recommendations
(Written Question on Notice)

Senator GALLACHER asked:

- a) What recommendations of the 2010 Steering Committee into Veterans health were implemented by the Department?
- b) Where can these recommendations be located?

Answer

a)

- Phase One of what was then the Support for Injured or Ill Project (SIIP) was conducted between August and December 2010 and included a gap analysis of Defence, single Service and DVA incident reporting, welfare, health care, rehabilitation, compensation and transition policies, processes and services.
- The Phase One review concluded that the system supporting injured or ill Defence members is generally good and results in a high return-to-work rate for rehabilitated members. However, the review confirmed that a more coordinated and integrated approach across welfare, rehabilitation, compensation and transition programs had the potential to not only improve outcomes for ADF members and their families but also better support commanders in meeting their responsibilities.
- The Phase One report made 31 recommendations which were accepted by both Defence and DVA for implementation under Phase Two of the renamed Support for Wounded, Injured or Ill Program (SWIIP).
- Phase Two of SWIIP commenced in early 2011 and was completed in February 2014. Of the 31 recommendations, 30 were closed following implementation. Achievements include:
 - A new Memorandum of Understanding between Defence and DVA for the Cooperative Care and Support of Eligible Persons - signed on 5 February 2013 and revised in 2016;
 - Processes to provide DVA with advice when an ADF member is involved in a serious incident or is to separate from Defence on medical or certain administrative grounds; and
 - Establishment in October 2011 of the DVA On Base Advisory Service.
- On 31 March 2014 the Defence DVA Links Steering Committee endorsed the progression of SWIIP Phase Three, current program activity.

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- The key focus of SWIIP Phase Three is improving information exchange between Defence and DVA and includes projects such as the Defence DVA Electronic Information Exchange Strategy (DDEIE) and the Early Engagement Model (EEM).
- The DDEIE received 2016 Defence White Paper funding for Defence elements, while DVA's input will form part of the Veteran Centric Reform program. The Early Engagement Model aims to reduce time taken to make and process claims by establishing a relationship with members from the day they join and providing services and support at other points along the way.

b)

The 2010 report can be found at:

<http://www.defence.gov.au/publications/siipreviewcurrentpractices.pdf>

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Question 40

Outcome: 2 Program: 2.1

Topic: Veterans Health

(Written Question on Notice)

Senator GALLACHER asked:

- a) How many specialist providers have agreements with DVA?
- b) What is the number of specialist services which has been provided to health card holder (by specialist category) over the last five years? Can this please be provided as a breakdown over each financial year.
- c) What is the waiting time for veterans to access specialists? Can this please be provided as a breakdown over each financial year.

Answer

- a) DVA does not have agreements with specialist providers as all specialists who have appropriate qualifications and are registered with Medicare, are eligible to provide services to entitled veterans.
- b) DVA does not hold information on specific specialist categories which would permit it to report on categories other than Medical Specialists. Medical Specialists who have provided services to entitled veterans in the last five years are captured in the table below.

Medical Specialists

Financial Years based on Date of Payment (DOP)	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016
Number of Service Providers	33,299	34,311	35,788	36,705	37,494

Note: DMIS Report run 27/3/2017 Data as of last refresh of 8/3/2017. This report is based on Specialist Service Items Codes/Categories that can only be used by specialist in that field.

- c) DVA does not have data regarding waiting times for veterans to access specialists.

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Question 41

Outcome: 2 Program: 2.5

Topic: Mefloquine health studies
(Written Question on Notice)

Senator GALLACHER asked:

Has the Government undertaken follow up health studies on the ADF members participated in the Bougainville and East Timor drug trials? If not, why not?

Answer

The Australian Defence Force (ADF) studies of anti-malarial drugs were conducted by the Army Malaria Institute (AMI). Information is available at <http://www.defence.gov.au/Health/HealthPortal/Malaria/default.asp> and queries should be directed to the Department of Defence.

The Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) has not commissioned follow-up health studies on former ADF members who participated in the AMI studies, noting that these studies found that mefloquine and tafenoquine were generally well tolerated as malaria prophylaxis.

On 14 February 2017, the Repatriation Medical Authority gave notice that it intends to carry out an investigation to find out whether Statements of Principles may be determined in respect of chemically-acquired brain injury caused by mefloquine, tafenoquine or primaquine (refer <http://www.rma.gov.au/sops/non-sop-investigations/>).

DVA is aware of concerns that have been raised regarding the potential adverse side-effects associated with these anti-malarial medications. Following the completion of the RMA's investigation, opportunities for further research in this area will be considered.

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Question 42

Outcome: 2 Program: 2.5

Topic: Mefloquine/ Tafenoquine

(Written Question on Notice)

Senator GALLACHER asked:

- a) Is the Department aware of any work being undertaken to register Tafenoquine with the TGA?
- b) Has the department been involved in this process or been approached to provide any assistance to register the drug?
- c) If so, what is this assistance?

Answer

a) No.

b) No.

c) Not applicable.

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Question 43

Outcome: 2 Program: 2.5

Topic: Veteran Suicide data and involvement

(Written Question on Notice)

Senator GALLACHER asked:

- a) Can the Department provide or update any data on the number of veteran suicides for 2016?
- b) Can the department advise the number so far for 2017?
- c) How does the department become aware of a veterans' suicide?
- d) What involvement does the department have when a coronial inquest is underway?
- e) What involvement does the department have with the coroner broadly on matters related to the deaths of veterans?

Answer

a) No. There is no national, certified, cause of death data for the Australian population for 2016 at this time.

DVA commissioned the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) study, *Estimation of the Incidence of suicide among serving and ex-serving Australian Defence Force personnel 2001–2014*, which matched Personnel Management Key System (PMKeyS) data to the National Death Index (NDI) to identify certified suicide deaths between 2001 and 2014.

DVA intends to maintain a robust record of the incidence of suicide in the ex-serving community into the future and will build on the data set held by the AIHW. Cause of death data (NDI) for 2015 is expected to be incorporated into the AIHW data set during 2017, with a report published later in 2017.

b) No. There is no national, certified, cause of death data for Australian population for 2017 at this time.

c) DVA only becomes officially aware of a death by suicide of a veteran if a claim for compensation is lodged by a dependant in respect of the death of a veteran. In this case, a cause of death must be investigated to establish a relationship with service.

d) DVA will only become involved with a coronial inquest when the Department receives a request to assist from the Coroners Court. DVA responds to such requests for information in accordance with standard practices and processes for release of information. Further, response to part e) also refers when DVA may be involved when a coronial inquest is underway.

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The Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service (VVCS) responds to coronial requests as per the VVCS Clinical Practice Policy. Coroners' requests, either directly or via an investigating police officer appointed by the coroner, are complied with in a similar way to subpoenas.

e) DVA communicates with the coroner on an as needed basis when requests for information are received. Additionally, DVA communicates with a coroner to request death certificates and/or coronial investigation reports in relation to a claim DVA is processing. VVCS does not normally engage with coroners outside of specific requests.

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Question 44

Outcome: all Program: all

Topic: Digital Readiness Bill - Section 202

(FADT Hansard Proof 1 March 2017, p 113)

Senator KAKOSCHKE-MOORE asked:

Senator KAKOSCHKE-MOORE: I apologise but I do not have those sections of the social security act to hand. Is section 208 narrower in scope than section 202 in terms of the type of information that can be released?

Ms Spiers: I am not sure. I do not have 208 with me—I have 202. But 208 is the public interest disclosure equivalent that allows the ability for the Minister for Social Services to make rules for the purposes of the disclosure. There are no rule-making powers as far as I can read with section 202, which is the provision I am told was the fundamental underpinning of the disclosure at the weekend.

Senator KAKOSCHKE-MOORE: I see. There were no rules governing the release of information under that particular section of the act?

Ms Spiers: To the best of my knowledge. But, as I said, I am relying on media reports that suggested that it was section 202. It is a disclosure power at section 202, and it is not the provision that we were relying on as the equivalent disclosure provisions for the public interest disclosure rules that were developed in the digital readiness bill.

Senator KAKOSCHKE-MOORE: If you could confirm your understanding of that on notice that would be fantastic.

Senator MOORE: Ms Spiers, we met the other day.

Ms Spiers: Yes, Senator.

Answer

Paragraph 202(2)(b) of the *Social Security (Administration) Act 1999* authorises a person to disclose protected information to any person, for a purpose specified in subsection 202(2). This is distinct from the power which section 208 of the *Social Security (Administration) Act 1999* gives the Secretary to disclose protected information when the Secretary certifies that it is in the public interest to do so. In giving such certification the Secretary must act in accordance with the guidelines in force under section 209. The *Social Security (Public Interest Certificate Guidelines) (DSS) Determination 2015* (issued by the Minister under section 209 of the *Social Security (Administration) Act 1999*) only apply to disclosures under section 208, and not to disclosures under section 202.

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Question 45

Outcome: 1 Program: 1.4

Topic: British Nuclear Tests

(FADT Hansard Proof 1 March 2017, p 128)

Senator LUDLAM asked:

Senator LUDLAM: I recognise that you might need to throw this to the minister if this is considered a policy question, but is there any chance, while there are still some of these people left, that we could just hook them up to an automatic gold card entitlement?

Ms Foreman: That is probably not a question I can answer at this stage.

Senator Payne: I do not have any advice on that, but I will take it on notice.

Senator LUDLAM: If you could, I would greatly appreciate it. Do you have any figures on how many of these individuals might already have a gold card entitlement? I do not know that we have ever seen that before.

Ms Foreman: I do not think that we do. Can I take that on notice. Some of them would have, but not from their British nuclear test experience but from their service elsewhere.

Senator LUDLAM: I am not sure we have ever been able to establish what proportion of those people—

Ms Foreman: No, I do not have that figure on me, but I will see if I can get it.

Senator LUDLAM: I appreciate it, and Senator Payne has undertaken to find out if there is anything in the works.

Answer

Any legislative change which would enable British Nuclear Test (BNT) veterans to access the Gold Card automatically would be a matter for Government. Under the existing provisions, former members of the Australian armed forces with BNT defence service as defined in the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA) will be issued with the Gold Card if they have a high level of disability from conditions accepted as relating to service. That is, where they are in receipt of a disability pension under the VEA at 100 per cent of the general rate of pension, or a rate of pension above the general rate (e.g. the extreme disablement adjustment). Additionally, some individuals with BNT service may have other service that automatically qualifies them for a Gold Card at age 70, regardless of their level of disability.

On the basis of the available data, it is not possible to give a completely accurate indication of how many BNT veterans currently hold a Gold Card. This is because, as noted above, there is a possibility that there may be a number of BNT veterans who have been issued with Gold Cards because they are 70 years of age or older and have qualifying service in wars and conflicts (e.g. the Second World War, Korea). Other veterans may also never have lodged any claims in relation to their BNT service, and therefore, DVA would not necessarily have any visibility of their status as BNT veterans.

Considering the various eligibility pathways and system limitations, DVA statistics indicate that, as of 1 July 2016, there were 231 Gold Card holders who were also specifically recorded as BNT veterans.

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Question 46

Outcome: 2 Program: 2.4

Topic: Grants Approval

(FADT Hansard Proof 1 March 2017, p 130)

Senator GALLACHER asked:

Senator GALLACHER: So the department simply assessed all of these projects. For the ones that have met the criteria, you have applied some scrutiny and due diligence to it, and you have recommended them up. Only 33 projects went out for the \$500,000; is that how it went?

Ms Vardos: In that particular round. The department receives for this program, I think, anywhere between 100 and 200—I would have to take the exact number on notice—and the majority of the applicants actually get their grants up. It is very rare, in this program, not to have them up. Where there are concerns that their grant applications do not meet the guidelines for the program, we will work with those organisations to make sure that their grants are in line so that they can be accepted in the next round. The figures that you are talking about, I suspect, are in relation to that particular round, but there will be other rounds. As I mentioned, there are generally four, but it could be up to six rounds per annum, depending on the year.

Answer

In the 2015-16 Financial Year (FY), the Department received 137 applications for the Veteran and Community Grants (V&CG) program. Of these, 122 were recommended for funding and 15 did not progress as they did not meet the guidelines at that point in time.

In the 2016-17 FY, as at 28 March 2017, the Department received 112 applications for V&CG funding. Of these, 100 were recommended for funding and 12 did not progress as they did not meet the guidelines at that point in time.

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Question 47

Outcome: 1 Program: 1.2, 1.3, and 1.6

Topic: Mefloquine Support Team

(FADT Hansard Proof 1 March 2017, p 117).

Senator GALLACHER asked:

Senator GALLACHER: Has the Minister for Veterans' Affairs has undertaken to establish a dedicated DVA mefloquine support team?

Dr Gardner: That has been done. I mentioned earlier that we have this processing team in Melbourne who have been taught. The other part of it is that in the two weeks before the Townsville outreach program in December, I hosted an evening meeting in Townsville for general practitioners and clinical psychologists to bring them up to date, in conjunction with the ADF, on anything to do with mefloquine. We got their signed consent, so that when veterans came to those Townsville three-day meetings—we had the 91 people—if anyone said, 'My doctor does not know about mefloquine. Who can I see?' We will say, without recommending, 'Here is a list of five doctors, pick one of these. All of these people know about this and are prepared to help you if they can.'

Senator GALLACHER: How many FTEs would have been in this dedicated team?

Dr Gardner: I believe there are four, but I would have to double check that. John Geary might be able to give us the numbers.

Answer

Yes, a dedicated DVA mefloquine support team has been established. The team is based in Melbourne and there are two full-time equivalent staff assigned to manage mefloquine-related claims within a team of six staff. When a claim is lodged for a condition linked to mefloquine, it is given priority by the assessors. The claim assessors in the team also assist with complex case assessment work during periods of low intake of mefloquine-related claims.

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Question 48

Outcome: 1 Program: 1.2, 1.3, and 1.6

Topic: Compensation Claims

(FADT Hansard Proof 1 March 2017, p 123-124)

Senator ROBERTS asked:

Senator ROBERTS: How many claims for compensation from Australian military veterans were rejected by DVA in the last 12 months, in last five years and in the last 10 years, and what are the percentages?

Mr Orme: We will have to take that question and the detail on notice, but I highlighted to you earlier the number of decisions that were taken. For primary decisions, in 2015-16 there were 44,588 and in 2014-15 there were 48,711. So DVA make in the order of 50,000 primary decisions for establishing initial liability a year. On top of that, as we discussed previously, the secretary mentioned the non-liability health care. We now have two tracks. The key element is that, where liability is established, we provide treatment once a liability is determined. The second part of that phase is then determining the level of impairment and, if you like, compensation. In non-liability health care, we have people immediately into treatment upon calling the department and saying they have one of those five conditions mentioned previously. That is non-liability health care, where we separate the requirement for establishing liability and immediately get the veteran into treatment.

Senator ROBERTS: Yes, I have talked with the department secretary and John Harris, and I met with the minister during the break, and we are going to do something to help publicise that tomorrow or the next day.

Mr Lewis: If I could say one thing about the question you have asked, though: we have said we can take it on notice, but you have mentioned going back five or 10 years and I am not sure our system is going to be good enough to give you what you want. But we will take it on notice and see what is available.

Answer

In 2015-16, there were 33,427 claimed liability conditions determined under the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986*, the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988* and the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* of which 11,368 conditions (34 per cent) were not accepted. For the last five financial years ending 30 June 2016, 178,230 claimed liability conditions were determined of which 58,735 conditions (33 per cent) were not accepted. The Department's systems are unable to produce comparative data for the last 10 financial years.

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Question 49

Outcome: 1 Program: all

Topic: Industry Advisory Committee

(Written Question on Notice)

Senator GALLACHER asked:

- a) How many business people have signed on to be a part of the Industry Advisory Committee?
- b) Who are they?
- c) Are they a cross section of industries?
- d) What consideration is given to ensuring different sectors are involved?
- e) Can the department provide the breakdown of the gender of the members?
- f) Is the Department proactively asking different businesses to be involved? If yes, how many?

Answer

- a) b) and e) On 11 March 2017, the Minister for Veterans' Affairs appointed a chair, deputy chair, a small business owner, a representative of a peak industry organisation and representatives of twelve other businesses to the Committee.

Three members were directly appointed to the Committee:

- Mr George Frazis, Chief Executive of the Consumer Bank Division of Westpac Group, was appointed as Chair;
- Mr Ben Roberts-Smith VC, MG, was appointed as Deputy Chair; and
- Ms Natalie Colbert, small business owner, was appointed to represent small businesses.

Ten other businesses and the peak industry group were invited to serve on the Committee:

- Allied Express Transport,
- Australia Post,
- Westpac Banking Corporation,
- Clayton Utz,
- CSC Australia Pty Ltd,
- J.P. Morgan Chase Bank, NA (Sydney Branch),
- PwC,
- Raytheon Australia,
- Saab Australia Pty Ltd,
- Serco Australia Pty Ltd,
- Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

- c) Yes.
- d) The businesses appointed to the Committee were selected to represent a cross-section of small, medium and large organisations, and a range of industries.
- f) The role of businesses that expressed interest in being appointed to the Committee will be considered by the Committee.

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Question 50

Outcome: 1 Program: 1.4

Topic: Advocacy Training and Development Program

(Written Question on Notice)

Senator GALLACHER asked:

- a) How is the Advocacy, Training and Development Program delivered to individuals?
- b) If this is through Registered Training Organisation's (RTO's), how many RTO's deliver the program?
- c) Where are they located?

Answer

- a) The Advocacy Training and Development Program (ATDP) is delivered in accordance with the best practice adult education model, where 70 per cent of training is delivered through on-the-job activities, 20 per cent is from mentoring, and 10 per cent is delivered through educational frameworks such as online and face-to-face training.
- b) Yes, the ATDP has partnered with one RTO, being *Major Training Services Pty Ltd*, to deliver ATDP training courses and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) assessment workshops across Australia.
- c) Major Training Services' head office is in Queenscliff, New South Wales. ATDP face-to-face training sessions are held in all capital cities and in regional locations, wherever and whenever there is a sufficient number of course participants to schedule a course in that location.

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Question 51

Outcome: 1 Program: 1.2, 1.3, and 1.6

Topic: Claims

(Written Question on Notice)

Senator GALLACHER asked:

- a) Can the Department advise the current average length of time a DVA claim takes from lodgement to a final decision being made?
- b) Can the Department advise how many claims were accepted and how many were rejected?

Answer

In 2015-16 time taken to process (TTTP) targets for compensation claims were met for liability claims under the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA), the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988* (SRCA) and the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA). Under the VEA the mean TTTP was 72 days; the SRCA was 118 days and the MRCA was 117 days.

In 2015-16 under the VEA, 12,981 compensation conditions were determined with 8,078 accepted and 4,903 not accepted; under the SRCA 5,920 compensation liability conditions were determined with 3,603 accepted and 2,317 not accepted and under the MRCA 14,526 compensation liability conditions were determined with 10,378 accepted and 4,148 not accepted.

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Question 52

Outcome: 1 Program: 1.2

Topic: Communication strategy for changes to non-liability health care
(Written Question on Notice)

Senator KAKOSCHKE-MOORE asked:

Mr Roberts-Smith as head of the Defence Abuse Response Taskforce reported that many of the old men who came to the Taskforce had been abused in the Defence Forces when they were boys and they have suffered lifelong impacts and many are living in social isolation and affected by mental health problems, alcoholism and other substance abuse.

It is well known that individuals suffering mental health, alcoholism and other substance abuse issues often have increased occurrence of physical health problems reduced life expectancy.

These men are now entitled to Non-Liability Health Care and - in view of changes to decision Guidelines - now have better prospects of establishing entitlement to other veterans' benefits for themselves and for their families. If these men die before they have established their entitlements, then there will be very little chance for their families to establish entitlements.

- a) Does the Department accept that there is an urgent need to communicate with these men and alert them to these changes?
- b) Has the Government given any direction to the Department about what priority is to be given to communicating with these men?
- c) What is the strategy to reach older male veterans?

Answer

- a) DVA recognises the need to communicate with as many survivors of abuse in the ADF as possible, and has developed a three stage communication strategy. The Repatriation Commission and the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission endorsed this strategy in February 2017, and initial activities under the strategy commenced before this in October 2016. The aim of the communication strategy is to provide information on changes to guidelines relating to the evidentiary requirements to establish that a particular incident of abuse in the ADF occurred, as well as supports available to survivors of abuse, such as non-liability health care arrangements and the Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service.
- b) Communicating with survivors of abuse in the ADF is a priority for the Government.
- c) As noted above, DVA is implementing a communication strategy comprising of three stages. The first stage, which is complete, involved the provision of information about support available to survivors on DVA's website and in social media, in DVA publications and in communications with ex-service organisations and health providers. The second stage includes new Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service pamphlets, articles in Defence and DVA publications, media releases and letters to the editors of newspapers. Stage three is a proposed advertising campaign with a broader approach and utilising a range of different media, aimed at reaching socially isolated survivors in rural and regional areas in particular.

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Question 53

Outcome: 1 Program: 1.2

Topic: Communication strategy for changes to guidelines

(Written Question on Notice)

Senator KAKOSCHKE-MOORE asked:

It is now eight months since Justice McClellan in the Child Abuse Royal Commission asked the representative of the Department of Veterans' Affairs to take back his 'advice' that the Guidelines for DVA delegates to consider were not in accordance with the law. Departmental officers stated in October Estimates hearings that the Repatriation Commission and the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission had agreed in September to changes to these Guidelines. Those Departmental officers also said that there would have to be a communications strategy.

The targets for communicating are old men living in social isolation affected by mental health and substance abuse issues.

Does the Department accept that these men are not likely to be reached by twitter, Facebook and website messages but are likely to be reached by Television and radio coverage?

a) Does the Department accept that children affected by abuse who left the Defence Forces after a short time are not likely to be involved with Veterans' organisations and are therefore not likely to be reached by messages to those organisations?

I have not seen or heard any messages in mainstream media – television, radio or newspapers about these changes or about NLHC.

b) Is the Minister proposing to appear on television and radio to reach out to these victims?

c) If not will senior Departmental officers use those options for communicating with these old men?

Answer

The Department's communications strategy with regard to the services and support available to survivors of abuse comprises a variety of communications channels, including but not limited to social media and other digital means. In formulating its proposed advertising campaign, the Department has followed the advice of the Government's media agency, Dentsu Mitchell, that almost as many individuals aged 60+ use social networking as listen to the radio, read newspapers or watch television.

a) The Department recognises that not all former members of the Defence Forces are involved with ex-service organisations. Communicating services and support available to survivors of abuse through such organisations is a small but important part of the communications strategy.

b) The Department's communications strategy with regard to the services and support available to survivors of abuse comprises a variety of communications channels, based on advice from Dentsu Mitchell.

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- c) The Department has already utilised a broad range of media to communicate to survivors of abuse regarding the services and support available. DVA is implementing a communication strategy comprising three stages. The first stage involved providing information about available support on DVA's website and in social media, in DVA publications and in communications with ex-service organisations and health providers. The second stage includes new Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service pamphlets, articles in Defence and DVA publications, media releases and letters to the editors of newspapers. Stage three is a proposed advertising campaign with a broader approach and utilising a range of different media, aimed at reaching socially isolated survivors in rural and regional areas in particular.

Separately, DVA can provide treatment to anyone who has served full-time in the ADF for post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety and alcohol and substance use disorders without having to determine that the condition is related to service. A digital advertising campaign has been launched to inform current and former members of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) about accessing this treatment. This campaign will also inform survivors of abuse of the support services available to them.

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Question 54

Outcome: 1 Program: 1.2

Topic: Barriers to access compensation

(Written Question on Notice)

Senator KAKOSCHKE-MOORE asked:

In the Processes to Support Victims of Abuse report in October 2014 the FADT Committee recommended - recommendation 6 - that the Department of Veterans' Affairs be directed to identify and report to Government on practical and legal barriers for victims of abuse to access DVA benefits. The Department stated in Estimates in 2015 that the Department would report to the Minister in early 2016.

- a) Has the Department made that report?
- b) If not why not?
- c) When does it propose to report?

In its October 2014 Processes to Support Victims report the FADT Committee recommended – (recommendation 7) - that consideration be given to options for providing funding to assist organisations like COMBADAS.

- d) Has the Department reported to Government on that issue?
- e) If not why not?

Answer

Recommendation 6

- a) The Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) is finalising a report to government on practical and legal barriers for victims of abuse to access DVA benefits.
- b) In June 2016, the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse examined the experiences of children who served at HMAS Leeuwin from 1960 to 1980, Army Apprentice School Balcombe from 1970 to 1980 and in the Australian Defence Force (ADF) Cadets since 2000.

The Royal Commission hearing raised a number of issues around DVA's policies and procedures for handling claims related to sexual and physical abuse that intersected with the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee inquiry, particularly the evidentiary difficulties faced by claimants in establishing that an incident of abuse occurred.

Having examined the matters raised by the Royal Commission hearing, DVA sought the Repatriation Commission and the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission (Commissions) views in regard to proposed changes to DVA's policies and procedures for handling claims relating to sexual and physical abuse, and to a strategy to communicate the new policy.

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On 29 September 2016, the Commissions agreed to new guidelines in relation to the use of statutory declarations to satisfy evidentiary requirements for claims involving sexual or physical abuse experienced by members and ex-members of the ADF during their defence service.

On 3 February 2017, the Commissions endorsed a communications strategy, including a proposed advertising campaign, to promulgate the guideline changes and the support available to survivors of sexual and physical abuse in the ADF.

Following consideration of these issues by the Commissions, DVA is now in a position to finalise the report to the Government.

- c) A report to the Government is currently being finalised.
- d) DVA is finalising a report concerning recommendation 7 to the Government relating to options to provide financial assistance to support a national, sustainable, community-based approach to assisting veterans who have suffered abuse.
- e) The Department has a number of grants programs that could potentially support organisations providing community-based services to survivors of abuse.

The Government made an election commitment to provide \$4 million over the forward estimates to establish a grants program to support the needs of younger veterans, which was reflected in MYEFO. The Department is in the process of establishing this grants program to commence operation in the last quarter of 2016-17. The report under recommendation 7 has been delayed in order to take account of this new grants program.

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Question 55

Outcome: 2 Program: 2.6

Topic: Rehabilitation

(Written Question on Notice)

Senator KAKOSCHKE-MOORE asked:

- a) Up until the end of 2016, how many current and former serving members were being provided with Rehabilitation as a result of disabilities caused through either warlike or non-war like injuries?
- b) On average how much in dollar terms is being spent on each recipient annually?
- c) How many Rehabilitation Providers are contracted to DVA currently both Australia wide and in each state?
- d) Against the total numbers of recipients, how many people have been returned to part or full time employment outside the ADF in the past 3 years?
- e) Are you able to also include any cases of former Rehabilitation recipients who have become self-employed?
- f) Can DVA provide the qualification criteria each Provider places on its Case Workers who deal with former or current serving ADF Members?
- g) Do DVA demand a certain qualification criteria for each of its Contractors/ Providers?
- h) What is the hourly rate paid to these Providers?
- i) Do Providers have to achieve a certain quota to receive and maintain their DVA Endorsement?
- j) What communication has DVA had with their rehab providers, regarding what programs they can send people to?
- k) Is there a central referral database they can be referred to?

Answer

- a) In the 2016 calendar year, there were 3,991 rehabilitation plans in place for clients who were provided with Rehabilitation as a result of injuries and illnesses caused through their Australian Defence Force (ADF) service. The current Information Communication Technology (ICT) systems cannot distinguish between Rehabilitation plans provided for the injuries as a result of a particular type of service eg. warlike or non-war like injuries. For current serving members, the Chief of the Defence Force is the rehabilitation authority. DVA does not routinely provide rehabilitation for serving members.

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- b) In 2016, the average expenditure per client for rehabilitation was \$6,040.
- c) DVA does not hold contracts with Rehabilitation Service Providers, rather engagement of providers is on a fee for service basis using the Comcare approved directory of approved rehabilitation providers. Providers need to meet several additional criteria and undertake training in relation to DVA and its clients before they are able to provide rehabilitation services to DVA clients. Refer to response to f) below for further details.

As at 1 March 2017, there were 36 registered provider companies in the Comcare directory who have met the DVA requirements. Of these, four provider organisations have a national presence, and remaining providers deliver services in one or more States or regions.

State	Number of DVA rehabilitation providers as at 1 March 2017*
New South Wales	14
Victoria	8
Queensland	14
South Australia	6
Tasmania	2
Western Australia	8
Australian Capital Territory	8
Northern Territory	1
NATIONAL / ALL	4

*Some providers deliver services in more than one state, therefore the table should not be tallied.

- d) This information is not held in DVA systems. However, during 2016-17 DVA met with rehabilitation providers to discuss how to best utilise the data captured in their systems with a view of measuring more accurate return to work outcomes. This work is continuing.
- e) See response to d).
- f) As noted in response to a) DVA has responsibility for former serving members, and Defence generally has responsibility for current serving ADF members. Rehabilitation Providers and their consultants providing services for DVA are required to meet Comcare accreditation requirements, which are legislated and are complementary to the Heads of Workers Compensation Authorities (HWCA) standards. The criteria and operational standards for rehabilitation providers are detailed on the Comcare website.

Other than Comcare requirements, DVA requires Rehabilitation Providers and their consultants to meet a number of other criteria before working with veterans. These criteria include:

- i. demonstrated experience supporting other workers from a similar environment (such as police or emergency services personnel);
- ii. experience in assisting clients with complex medical conditions to move to a new job with a new employer, to change careers and/or move into a new industry;
- iii. experience in translating specific skills and qualifications to other industries;

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- iv. completion of DVA e-learning courses demonstrating a knowledge of military culture and DVA services; and
- v. a minimum of two years' hands on experience working with clients in medical management, vocational and/or psychosocial areas.

The DVA requirements do not apply to providers who only undertake specific service assessments, such as the activities of daily living/home assessment for household services or attendant care purposes. This is because these providers are assessing relatively straight forward services and needs rather than whole of person rehabilitation support requirements. However, all providers undertaking specific service assessments must still be Comcare accredited.

- g) See response to f).
- h) DVA does not set an hourly rate for Rehabilitation Providers.
- i) DVA does not set any minimum quota for Rehabilitation Providers.
- j) DVA uses a range of communication channels to inform Rehabilitation Service Providers about the types of programs they can refer veterans to and provide information on rehabilitation policy, procedural updates and topical issues. Channels include:
 - A bi-monthly e-newsletter, Rehab@DVA, circulated to over 400 Rehabilitation Providers and DVA rehabilitation staff across Australia, which is also published on the DVA's website.
 - Monthly policy updates via the Rehab@DVA distribution list. Policy changes are recorded in DVA's online Consolidated Library of Information and Knowledge (CLIK) which contains the Department's legislation, policy and reference material. CLIK is available online at <http://www.dva.gov.au/about-dva/consolidated-library-information-and-knowledge-clik>.
 - Bi-annual National Information Provider Sessions for Rehabilitation Service Providers and DVA rehabilitation staff via video-conference across national DVA office locations. These sessions provide a collaborate forum to inform and discuss DVA policies, programs and initiatives. In November 2016, over 170 individual consultants representing more than 30 Rehabilitation Providers, attended.
- k) See reference to CLIK in question (j) regarding the information available online to providers.

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Question 56

Outcome: all Program: all

Topic: PwC Contract

(FADT Hansard Proof 1 March 2017, p 106-107)

Senator GALLACHER asked:

Senator GALLACHER: All right. Thank you very much for that. If I can move to probably one of the most pressing issues in the department—the ICT systems upgrades. PwC has been engaged by the Department of Finance's Business Advisory Panel. They have come up with \$18.7 million to develop a second-pass business case. Did you meet the deadline on that? Is that completed and submitted to government?

Ms Cosson: I will just give you an introduction, if I may. The PwC contract, which I think you may have been referencing off our AusTender—I think there was a duplication in its reporting, for one thing. I think the contract value is just over \$9 million—so not the value you just mentioned. With our second-pass business case, as you know, in the budget last year we received some funding to develop that business case to be considered as part of our budget process this year. I can report to the committee that we are on track. I am very pleased with the quality of that report. PwC was a strategic partner to give us advice in the development of that business case because it requires a range of artefacts and it requires us to engage very closely with a number of agencies, but also to look at the digital standards that are required to present a large ICT project. At the moment that business case has been circulated and, as I mentioned, it is now part of the budget process. It has picked up a range of feedback that, as I mentioned—

Senator GALLACHER: I have a number of questions. Can you clarify what you just said to us then? I am talking about Department of Finance business advisory panel from 8 August 2016 until yesterday, 28 February at a cost of \$18.7 million. Are you saying that is wrong? Is it only \$9 million?

Ms Cosson: I would have to—

Senator GALLACHER: I think you mentioned a figure of \$9 million.

Ms Cosson: Yes. Through AusTender, which I do have in my folder, we entered into a contract with PwC for our second pass business case for them to provide the service as a strategic partner. I think the value of that contract was about \$9 million.

Senator GALLACHER: Okay. Can we just clarify that?

Mr Lewis: We might need to check that.

Answer

On page 25 of the 2016-17 DVA Budget Statements, \$18,653 (\$18.7 million) was allocated to the Department of Veterans' Affairs for the development of a second pass business case for Veteran Centric Reform.

DVA sought a strategic partner to assist with this. Pricewaterhouse Coopers (PwC) was the successful tenderer, under the Department of Finance, Standing Offer 3305648 – Business Advisory Panel and was contracted on the 8th August. The AusTender reference CN3371077-A1 for this contract shows the cost as \$9,368,053 GST inclusive.

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Question 57

Outcome: all Program: all

Topic: Business case for transforming DVA

(Written Question on Notice)

Senator GALLACHER asked:

The DVA Budget factsheet for 2016/17 states “\$24.8 was provided to DVA to develop a business case for transforming DVA's business operations and technology systems to be client focused, responsive and connected. DVA will receive funding of \$18.7 million and will work with the veteran community and the Department of Human Services (DHS) to develop the business case. DHS will receive \$6.1 million specifically to design the modern information, communication and technology solution that will underpin the business case and integrate with their new whole of government payment system solution.”

- a) Can the department provide the breakdown of where this funding went?
- b) How much was paid to PwC to develop the second pass business case?

Answer

- a) The Government provided \$24.8 million over two years from 2015-16 to develop the Second Pass Business Case (2PBC):
 - \$2.2m was provided to DHS in 2015-16;
 - \$3.9m was provided to DHS in 2016-17.
 - \$18.7m was provided to DVA in 2016-17. Expenditure as at end of February 2017 was:
 - approximately \$3.6m in staffing costs;
 - approximately \$8.4m in contractor and consultant costs;
 - approximately \$0.8 in other administrative costs.
- b) PwC was contracted on 8 August 2016 for \$9,368,053 GST inclusive.

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Question 58

Outcome: all Program: all

Topic: VAN Offices

(Written Question on Notice)

Senator GALLACHER asked:

Can the department please provide the following information in relation to VAN offices –

- a) Location of each van office
- b) Staff numbers
- c) FTE allocation
- d) Opening hours of each office

Answer

The location, staff numbers and FTE allocation for each VAN office are provided in the table below. The staff numbers and FTE allocation identify staff with a VAN function.

With the exception of Greater Western Sydney and Wodonga VANs, all VAN offices are open from Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 4.30pm. The Greater Western Sydney VAN provides in-person services by appointment only. The Wodonga VAN is open from Monday to Friday, 9.00am to 5.00pm.

State / Territory	Suburb	Street Address	Staff Numbers (Head Count)	FTE Allocation
ACT	Woden	28-30 Corinna Street	3	2.7
NSW	Surry Hills (Sydney)	Centennial Plaza B, Levels G-5 280 Elizabeth Street	14	14
NSW	Greater Western Sydney (Parramatta)	Suite 41, 60 Station Street East	Nil	Nil
NSW	Lismore	Suite 6 & 8, Conway Court 17 Conway Street	3	3
NSW	Newcastle	Suite 1 & 2 Ground floor 6 Auckland Street	3	2.7
NT	Winnellie (Darwin)	U1 Winnellie Central 14 Winnellie Road	8	8
QLD	Brisbane	Levels 4-8, 259 Queen Street	13	13
QLD	Townsville	Level 1, 520 Flinders Street	3	3
QLD	Broadbeach	Level 3b & 11 Niecon Tower 17 Victoria Avenue	3	3
QLD	Maroochydore	Shop 2/129 Horton Parade	3	3
SA	Adelaide	Levels ground to 2 199 Grenfell Street	13	13

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State / Territory	Suburb	Street Address	Staff Numbers (Head Count)	FTE Allocation
TAS	Hobart	254-286 Liverpool Street	10	8.4
TAS	Launceston	105/287 Charles Street	2	2
VIC	Melbourne	Levels 11-13 300 La Trobe Street, 3000	23	20.8
VIC	Wodonga	81 Hume Street	1	0.8
WA	Perth	140 St Georges Terrace	24	22.13

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Question 59

Outcome: all Program: all

Topic: VAN Office closures
(Written Question on Notice)

Senator GALLACHER asked:

Can the Department advise when the last VAN office was closed and where this was located? How are services being provided to this community?

Answer

The last VAN office to close was in Toowoomba, Queensland on 17 June 2016. In-person services are available from DVA-trained staff at the Department of Human Services (DHS) Service Centre in Toowoomba.

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Question 60

Outcome: all Program: all

Topic: Government Waste – Department of Veteran Affairs

(Written Question on Notice)

Senator XENOPHON asked:

Given that government and opposition politicians have all raised concerns over time and had policies on government waste:

1. Is there a central government authority responsible for the elimination of waste?
2. If so
 - a. Is there a government wide definition on the meaning of 'waste', and if so, what is that definition?
 - b. How does this central government authority monitor and manage waste within the Department?
 - c. Is there a central government mechanism (e.g. phone number, email address, web site) for public servants or contractors to report Departmental waste?
 - d. How much Departmental waste was identified by the central government authority in FY 13/14, FY 14/15 and FY 15/16?
3. If not:
 - a. Is there a departmental definition on the meaning of 'waste', and if so, what is that definition?
 - b. What are the Department's arrangements for monitoring and managing waste?
 - c. Is there a central Departmental mechanism (e.g. phone number, email address, web site) for public servants or contractors to report Departmental waste?
 - d. How much waste was identified by the Department in FY 13/14, FY 14/15 and FY 15/16?
4. In either case:
 - a. Can Departmental officers or contractors report waste anonymously?
 - b. Are they afforded a protection if they do so?

Answer

1. *'Refer to the Department of Finance's response to Additional Senate Estimates Question F128'*
2. *'Refer to the Department of Finance's response to Additional Senate Estimates Question F128'*
3. Departmental waste -
 - a. The *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (PGPA) Act 2013* establishes the system of governance and accountability for use of public resources. The PGPA establishes that the accountable authority of a Commonwealth entity must govern the entity in a way that promotes the proper use and management of public resources for which the authority is responsible.

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- b. DVA undertakes PGPA Act compliance reporting on a quarterly basis. Matters of significant non-compliance and actions taken to remedy non-compliance are reported to the Portfolio Minister and Finance Minister and for 2015-16 disclosed in the Annual Report. During the 2015-16 year the Department enhanced its fraud and non-compliance prevention measures through a program of education and training.
 - c. In addition to the quarterly and annual reporting of non-compliance, DVA has structured processes to report matters of any legislative non-compliance (reporting can be made through contact officers and a central email address). DVA also provides clear guidance on matters of non-compliance through its Accountable Authority Instruction on fraud control and reporting.
 - d. Disclosable non-compliance statistics are made available in the Annual Report –
 - i. 2015/16 – page 114 and 115
 - ii. 2014/15 – page 117 and 118
 - iii. 2013/14 – page 133 and 134
4. Departmental officers anonymity –
- a. Departmental officers or contractors are able to report non-compliance anonymously. This anonymity is provided for under the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2013* Part 1, Division 1, Section 28 (2) A public interest disclosure may be made anonymously.
 - b. The *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2013* Part 2 makes provision for protection of an individual who makes a public interest disclosure.