

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
—Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearing—November 2013**

Answers to Questions on Notice

Parliamentary Departments: Department of Parliamentary Services

Topic: **Freedom of Information**

Question No: **160**

Written: Senator Ludwig

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 17 January 2014

- 1) Can the department please outline the process it under goes to assess Freedom of Information requests?
- 2) Does the department consult or inform the Minister when it receives Freedom of Information requests?
 - a. If so, when?
 - b. If so, how does this occur?
- 3) Does the department consult or inform other departments or agencies when it receives Freedom of Information requests?
 - a. If so, which departments or agencies?
 - b. If so, when?
 - c. If so, how does this occur?
- 4) Does the department consult or inform the Minister when or before it makes a decision on a Freedom of Information request?
 - a. If so, when?
 - b. If so, how does this occur?
- 5) Does the department consult or inform other departments or agencies when or before it makes a decision on a Freedom of Information request?
 - a. If so, which departments or agencies?
 - b. If so, when?
 - c. If so, how does this occur?
- 6) What resources does the department commit to its Freedom of Information team?
- 7) List the staffing resources by APS level assigned solely to Freedom of Information requests
- 8) List the staffing resources by APS level assigned indirectly to Freedom of Information requests
- 9) Does the department ever second addition resources to processing Freedom of Information requests?
 - a. If so, please detail those resources by APS level
- 10) How many officers are currently designated decision makers under the Freedom of Information Act 1982 within the department?
 - a. How does this differ to the number of officers designated as at 6 September 2013?

- 11) How many officers are currently designated decision makers under the Freedom of Information Act 1982 within the Minister's office?
 - a. How does this differ to the number of officers designated as at 6 September 2013?
- 12) Of the officers that are designated decision makers under the Freedom of Information Act 1982 within the Ministers office, how many are seconded officers from the department?
- 13) What training does the department provide to designated decision makers under the Freedom of Information Act who work within the department?
 - a. Of the officers designated as decision makers within the department, how many have received formal training?
 - b. Of the officers designated as decision makers within the department, how many have received informal training?
 - c. How long after each officers appointment as a designated decision maker did they receive formal training?
 - d. What did the training involve?
 - e. How long was the training?
 - f. By whom was the training conducted?
- 14) What training does the department provide to designated decision makers under the Freedom of Information Act who work within the Minister's office, excluding those officers on secondment from the department?
 - a. Of the officers designated as decision makers, how many have received formal training?
 - b. Of the officers designated as decision makers, how many have received informal training?
 - c. How long after each officers appointment as a designated decision maker did they receive formal training?
 - d. What did the training involve?
 - e. How long was the training?
 - f. By whom was the training conducted?

Answer

The Parliament has amended the Parliamentary Service Act 1999 to confirm the intention of Parliament that all parliamentary departments are excluded from the application of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act). The effect of the amending legislation is that from Friday 28 June 2013 the FOI Act is taken not to apply and not to have ever applied to the parliamentary departments and persons who hold, or perform duties of, an office established under the Parliamentary Service Act.