

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
FEDERAL CIRCUIT COURT OF AUSTRALIA
FAMILY COURT OF AUSTRALIA

Question No. SBE15/101

Senator Collins asked the following question at the hearing on 20 October 2015:

1. The Federal Courts (Fees) Regulation 2015 (Cth) was made on 28 May. Schedule 2 of that Regulation increased fees in the Family Court and the Federal Circuit Court. Those fee increases were to commence on 1 July but were disallowed in the Senate on 25 June. What administrative preparations had been made in those courts prior to 25 June for the expected fee increases in those courts?
2. What administrative expenses were incurred to make those preparations?
3. What was the cost of those administrative expenses?
4. Were administrative expenses incurred after the disallowance on 25 June to undo any preparations that had been made prior to 25 June?
5. What was the cost of those extra administrative expenses?

The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:

1. The following administrative preparations were made prior to 25 June:
 - Communications strategy.
 - Changes to forms, brochures and websites.
 - Website messages and external communications.
 - Client service advice.
 - Notices for staff newsletter and external bulletin.
2. Communications work was undertaken by in-house resources, so no extra administrative costs were incurred. Print costs were incurred as detailed in the answer to question 3. IT work was undertaken by in-house resources/staff.
3. The cost of administrative expenses was:
 - Printing of family law fees brochure: \$1,301.30
 - Printing of fees poster for registries: \$120
 - IT Staff performing additional work: \$20,306 (figure is calculated using the estimated hours taken, per level, to execute the work and using the top level increment. Further detail of the cost figure is shown in the answer to question 5).
4. Obsolete fees brochures and posters were pulped at no actual cost. IT staff were required to perform additional work to undo preparations made prior to 25 June.
5. The cost of IT Staff performing additional work: \$11,321 (figure is calculated using the estimated hours taken, per level, to execute the work and using the top level increment).