

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications**  
**Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice**  
**Budget Estimates Hearings May 2013**  
**Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy Portfolio**  
**Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy**  
**Question No: 374**

**Program No. Legal**

**Hansard Ref: In Writing**

**Topic: Legal Costs**

**Senator Birmingham asked:**

1. What sum did each portfolio department and agency spend on legal services for this financial year to date within the department/agency? Please provide a list of each service and costs.
2. What sum did each portfolio department and agency spend on legal services this financial year to date from the Australian Government Solicitor? Please provide a list of each service and costs.
3. What sum did each portfolio department and agency spend on legal services this financial year to date from private firms? Please provide a list of each service and costs.
4. What sum did each portfolio department and agency spend on legal services this financial year to date from other sources? Please provide a list of each service and costs.

**Answer:**

1. The Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy's total expense on legal services from 1 July 2012 to 30 April 2013 was \$3,850,740. \$702,664 was expensed on external legal service providers. The expense on legal services provided in-house was \$3,148,076. Data on individual contracts of \$10,000 or more is available on *Austender* ([www.tenders.gov.au](http://www.tenders.gov.au)).
2. The Department's total expense on legal services provided by the Australian Government Solicitor from 1 July 2012 to 30 April 2013 was \$203,789. Data on individual contracts of \$10,000 or more is available on *Austender* ([www.tenders.gov.au](http://www.tenders.gov.au)).
3. The Department's total expense on legal services provided by private law firms from 1 July 2012 to 30 April 2013 was \$487,399. Data on individual contracts of \$10,000 or more is available on *Austender* ([www.tenders.gov.au](http://www.tenders.gov.au)).
4. The Department's total expense on legal services provided by other sources from 1 July 2012 to 30 April 2013 was \$11,476. Data on individual contracts of \$10,000 or more is available on *Austender* ([www.tenders.gov.au](http://www.tenders.gov.au)).

The Government does not generally disclose the content of legal advice received by the Government or its agencies. It is important for any government to be able to make fully informed decisions based on comprehensive and confidential legal advice. As such only total figures for legal service expenditure will be provided.