Question No: 121

Corporate & Business

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: ATTENDANCE AT INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM

Senator Minchin asked:

a) In relation to the Internet Governance Forum that the Minister attended in Egypt, when did he accept the invitation to attend?

b) On what date did the Minister register for the event?

c) What was the purpose of this forum?

d) Was the Minister involved as an official speaker, panel member or moderator at any of the sessions which were held, as his name does not seem to appear among the many names listed on the programme for the main sessions?

e) What exactly did the Minister do at this forum, was it just a case of sit and listen?

f) Was there any scope for him to participate remotely, by teleconference for example?

g) Did the Minister do any site seeing while in Egypt?

h) Did the Minister consider cancelling his visit to Egypt given the forum coincided with a crucial parliamentary sitting week?

Answer:

a) A general invitation was extended by Mr Sha Zukang, Under-Secretary-General, Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), on behalf of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, inviting participation of all entities, including governments, accredited to the World Summit on the Information Society. The Department registered on behalf of the Minister on 30 October 2009.

b) Please see answer (a) above.

c) The IGF is a key outcome of the World Summit on the Information Society, and was established as a multi-stakeholder discussion forum on internet related public policy issues. The IGF is unique in the range of stakeholders and the breadth of issues discussed. These include Governments, civil society, industry, non-government organisations, academia and international organisations.

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At the 2009 meeting, approximately 1800 people participated, including representatives from key industry stakeholders and from major developed and developing countries, including 15 foreign Ministers.

Topics of discussion at the 2009 IGF included:

o the management of critical internet resources;
o the growth potential of broadband;
o online child safety;
o internet openness and privacy;
o e-security and the emergence of modern cyber threats;
o the impact of social networks;
o opportunities to bolster youth internet access and participation; and
o general internet governance issues including the continuation of the IGF beyond 2010.

The 2009 forum was a strategically important opportunity to engage individual countries, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), and other international organisations that are involved in the management of critical internet resources. The Minister's active participation in the IGF was consistent with the Government's foreign policy priority for engagement in the United Nations.

The Minister's involvement in the forum was a unique occasion to engage with stakeholders that normally do not participate in other fora (such as the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Number (ICANN)). High level participation in the IGF sends an important message that Australia is willing to reach out to these stakeholders to build consensus on essential issues relating to internet governance. The Sharm El Sheikh forum was particularly important, as there was frank discussion of the recent decision of the United States Government to significantly alter its governance arrangements with ICANN.

d) No. Presentations at the IGF do not follow a traditional 'lecture' style. Instead, the IGF provides an opportunity for participants to engage in open, free and frank discussion on particular topics. Generally, facilitators, panel members and presenters at the IGF guide the discussion of the forum.

e) The Minister attended a number of open forums and workshops held during the Egypt IGF, and actively engaged in policy debate with other IGF participants at these meetings.

The Minister's participation provided a strategic opportunity to promote Australia's re-election to the ITU Council ahead of the plenipotentiary meeting later this year, as well as the opportunity to promote Australia's ground breaking work on cyber safety initiatives, approaches to online security and Australia's policy views on internet governance. Re-election to the ITU council is fundamental in influencing treaty processes that govern the use of the global radiofrequency spectrum and use of communications technologies. This in turn supports Australia's investment in telecommunications, satellite and broadcasting services, including Government investments in defence and scientific industries. A role in the ITU Council is also vital in supporting our long standing alliances with other nations.

As noted in answer (c), the Minister participated in discussion of a wide range of topics relevant to the portfolio including issues relating to internet governance, the emergence of modern cyber-threats and online child protection and safety.

In addition to participating in the main forum activities, the Minister held bilateral discussions on a range of issues related to the portfolio, including with:

- Ms Viviane Reding, EU Commissioner for Information Society and Media - Discussed Europe's position on the IGF, the European Commission's telecommunications regulatory reform and the National Broadband Network;

- Mr Rod Beckstrom, CEO of ICANN - Discussed the evolution of ICANN (including the role of Governments), new generic Top Level Domains, strategies on Internet Protocol version 6 (IPv6) and the Affirmation of Commitments signed between the United States Government and ICANN;

- Ms Lyn St.Amour, President/CEO of the Internet Society - Discussed internet governance arrangements, including the evolution of ICANN and the continuation of the IGF;

- Mr Alum Michaels, UK Member of Parliament- Discussed online cyber bullying and child protection guidelines, the continuation of the IGF, Commonwealth of Nations IGF and the re-election of Australia to the ITU council;

- Dr Tarek Kamel, Egyptian Minister of Communications and Information Technology- Discussed the future of the IGF and strategies to promote Australia as the host for future major international sporting events; and

- Mr Ferry de Kerckhove, Canadian Ambassador to Egypt- Discussed the continuation of the IGF.

f) No. The IGF offered limited remote participation services, and combined with the time difference, made effective remote participation impossible. Bilateral meetings with key Ministers and officials would have been impractical.

g) No.

h) Due to the significance and weight of this IGF meeting, it was important that Australia was represented at the most senior level possible, to influence future direction of the debate on internet governance.

Question No: 122

Corporate & Business

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: CONSULTANCY COSTS

Senator Minchin asked:

The graph on page 102 of the annual report (Fig 3.1) shows a dramatic spike in consultancy costs in the 2008/09 financial year. Total spending was around the $18 million mark, in 2007/08 the figure was around $11 million and in 2006/07 it was below $10 million.

a) Is the dramatic spike in expenditure on consultancies expected to continue in this current financial year?
b) Is the Department becoming increasingly reliant on external consultants?
c) Please provide a current figure on total spending on both consultants, external legal advice, including NBN Expert panel costs in relation to both the NBN Mark I and NBN Mark II proposal?
d) How much has been spent to date on the NBN Implementation Study?
e) What was exact amount of the contract for the Implementation Study which has been entered into with McKinsey/KPMG?
f) Is there scope for this contract to be revised?
g) Can you confirm whether or not incidental expenditure incurred by members of the McKinsey/KPMG Implementation Study team (travel, accommodation, meals) are included in the contract or are these paid separately?
h) If paid separately by the Department, could you provide a breakdown of costs incurred for travel, accommodation and meals; including details of the accommodation ie where people stayed, cost per meal, modes of transport, including class of travel?

Answer:

a) Expenditure is expected to continue in this current financial year as a result of the continuing NBN related consultancy agreement.
b) No.
c) The total spending on both consultants and external legal advice, including NBN Expert panel costs in relation to <u>NBN Mark I</u> is $$11,825,201. Consultancy/contractors and external legal advice expenses to 28 February 2010 for the <u>NBN Mark II</u>, total $25,443,154 (excluding GST)
d) .Consultancy and legal expenses for the Implementation Study to 28 February 2010 total $22,211,052 (excluding GST).
e) The contracted amount for McKinsey / KPMG is $22,799,700 (GST exclusive).
f) In alignment with the Department's standard form agreement there is a clause that allows for a variation to the contract.
g) Travel, accommodation and associated expenses are not reimbursed under the agreement.
h) Not applicable.

Question No: 123

Corporate & Business

Hansard Ref: **In Writing**

Topic: Employee Performance Bonuses

Senator Minchin asked:

On page 124 of the Annual Report Table 4.8, it shows that a total of 159 employees received performance payments totalling $1.22 million and that 7 employees received payments totalling $31, 874 this financial year for the 2007/08 financial year (Table 4.9) The highest individual payment was $27, 617.

a) Could you please explain the basis for which performance payments are made and how the individual amounts are calculated?
b) Could you provide a breakdown of performance payments made over the last three financial years?
c) When are the performance payments typically paid?

Answer:

a) Senior Executive Service (SES) level staff in the Department have access to Performance Based Pay via a Section 24/1 Determination.

Executive Level staff have access to Performance Based Pay if they agree to a Common Law Contract.

Currently, two staff at the APS6 classification access Performance Based Pay.

The Department specifies a five-point performance rating scale, as follows:

Rating scale
Unsatisfactory (1)
Needs Development (2)
Fully Effective (3)
Very good (4)
Outstanding (5)

The entitlement to, and payment of, a performance bonus is determined by the employees' end-cycle performance assessment rating. Payments are linked to the employees' annual base salary.

The performance bonus scale and attendant performance bonus payments follow:

Rating Achieved	Bonus Payment
Unsatisfactory (1)	Nil
Needs Development (2)	Nil
Fully Effective (3)	Nil
Very good (4)	5-9% of annual base salary
Outstanding (5)	10-15% of annual base salary

b) A breakdown of performance payments made over the last three financial years follows:

Performance payments 2005-06, paid in 2006-07:

Classification	Number of staff paid	Aggregate sum	Average amount	Lowest payment	Highest payment
SES	4	$31,335.20	$7,833.80	$3,681.60	$10,764.00
EL2	2	$8,685.47	$4,342.74	$3,909.80	$4,775.67
APS1-EL1	2	$6,580.34	$3,290.17	$1,102.00	$5,478.34
TOTAL	**8**	**$46,601.01**			

Source: Department of Communications, IT and the Arts Annual Report 06/07

Performance payments 2006-07:

Classification	Number of Staff Paid	Aggregate sum	Average amount	Lowest payment	Highest payment
SES	36	$431,948.58	$11,998.57	$6,190.00	$25,900.00
EL2	88	$648,591.58	$7,370.36	$2,019.27	$12,915.38
APS1-EL1	73	$381,414.40	$5,224.85	$1,496.51	$16,519.00
Total	**197**	**$1,461,954.56**			

Source: Department of Communications, IT and the Arts Annual Report 06/07
Note: Classifications with local designations, e.g. Legal and Public Affairs, have been subsumed into equivalent APS or EL Levels.

Performance payments for 2006-07, paid in 2007-08

Classification	Number of staff paid	Aggregate sum	Average amount	Lowest payment	Highest payment
EL1	1	$2,836.49	$2,836.49	$2,836.49	$2836.49

Source: Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, Annual Report 07/08

Performance payments 2007-08:

Classification	Number of staff paid	Aggregate sum	Average amount	Lowest payment	Highest payment
SES	36	$305,647.70	$8,490.20	$3,246.90	$24,489.36
EL2	74	$459,986.91	$6,216.40	$2,362.80	$12,648.20
APS1 – EL1	65	$375,400.21	$5,775.30	$1,512.19	$13,256.80
TOTAL	**175**	**$1,141,034.82**			

Source: Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, Annual Report 07/08
Note: Classifications with local designations, e.g. Legal and Public Affairs, have been subsumed into equivalent APS or EL Levels.

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Performance payments for 2007-08, paid in 2008-09:

Classification	Number of Staff paid	Aggregate sum	Average amount	Lowest payment	Highest payment
SES	2	$9,936.49	$4,968.25	$2,451.15	$7,485.34
EL2	1	$9,235.44	$9,235.44	$9,235.44	$9,235.44
APS1-EL2	4	$12,702.16	$3,175.54	$2,782.35	$3,567.62
TOTAL	**7**	**$31,874.09**			

Source: Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, Annual Report 08/09

Performance payments 2008-09:

Classification	Number of Staff paid	Aggregate sum	Average amount	Lowest payment	Highest payment
SES	24	$315,829.60	$12,159.57	$2,451.15	$27,617.85
EL2	54	$414,196.76	$7,670.31	$3,144.46	$15,800.16
APS1-EL2	81	$491,996.25	$6,074.03	$936.89	$13,557.35
TOTAL	**159**	**$1,222,022.61**			

Source: Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, Annual Report 08/09
Note: Classifications with local designations, e.g. Legal and Public Affairs, have been subsumed into equivalent APS or EL Levels.

c) The performance cycle ends in May each year. As a result, performance payments are typically made in June of each financial year.

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Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy Portfolio

Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy

Question No: 124

Program No. Corporate & Business

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Portfolio Staffing – Department Of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy

Senator Fisher asked:

a) What is the total expenditure on staffing for the Department and for all portfolio agencies? What is the SES & non-SES breakdown?

b) What are the current staffing levels for SES and non-SES officers? What is the breakdown by location?

c) What have been the changes in average staffing levels since November 2007? Why have these changes occurred? What have been the Budgetary implications?

d) In the case of reductions in staff numbers, how have these reductions been absorbed by the Department? What functions have been sacrificed and why?

e) Has there been a target for staff reductions to achieve savings? What is this target and what strategy is being implemented to achieve this?

f) Have any voluntary or involuntary redundancies been offered to staff? If so, how have staff been identified for such offers? Are there such plans for the future?

Answer:

a) Total expenses on employee benefits for the Department for the period 1 July 2009 to 31 January 2010 is $40.1m. Total expenses on employee benefits for the Department for the period 1 July 2009 to 31 January 2010 is $40.1m, including $3.7m for substantive SES staff. The Department has not included data relating to portfolio agencies as those agencies have responded to the same questions posed to them directly.

b) The breakdown (FTE) by location is:

	Canberra	Sydney	Melbourne	Total
SES	37.59	2.91	0	40.5
Non SES	548.98	57.60	0.8	607.38
Total	**586.57**	**60.51**	**0.8**	**647.88**

The figures above include one SES staff member who was absent on paid Maternity Leave and one staff member on temporary assignment of duties temporarily filling her position.

c) Over the period 30 November 2007 and 31 January 2010, the Department's staffing has fallen from 874.4 full time equivalent (FTE) employees to 647.9 FTE employees. This movement reflects the impact of the December 2007 Machinery of Government changes to the former Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts and also reflects the impact of government decisions over the period.

d) Since December 2007 the Department has had no further reduction in staff numbers since the Government came to office.

e) The Department does not have a target for staff reductions to achieve savings.

f) Since Additional Estimates in October 2009, there have been no voluntary or involuntary redundancies offered to staff. The Department has no plans to initiate a further round of voluntary retrenchments.

Question No: 125

Corporate & Business

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Portfolio Staffing – Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy

Senator Barnett asked:

a) How many permanent staff recruited since the supplementary budget estimates?

b) What level are these staff?

c) How many temporary positions exist or have been created since budget estimates?

d) Since supplementary budget estimates, how many employees have been employed on contract   and what is the average length of their employment period?

Answer:

The following figures are based on **headcount** for the Department.

a) A total of 45 ongoing (permanent) staff have been employed since the supplementary budget estimates.

b) The breakdown of staff level of ongoing staff employed since the supplementary budget estimates appears in the table below:

Classification	Ongoing Promotions	Ongoing transfer at level	Engagement into APS
APS1	0	0	8
APS2	0	0	12
APS3	0	0	0
APS4	0	0	0
APS5	1	1	2
APS6	4	2	2
EL1	2	8	1
EL2	2	0	0
Total	**9**	**11**	**25**

c) A total of 8 non-ongoing (temporary) positions (specified task contracts) have been created since budget estimates.

d) Since 19 October 2009, 35 employees have been employed on non-ongoing contracts. The average length of their non-ongoing employment period is 1.05 years.
Note: The average length of the non-ongoing employment period is defined as the **total** length of the non-ongoing employment period.

Some of these non-ongoing employees are filling positions that are temporarily vacant.

Question No: 126

Corporate and Business

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Election Commitments

Senator Fisher asked:

a) What is the status of each election commitment within the portfolio?
b) Which election commitments are experiencing slippages? Why? Where relevant, what are the revised implementation dates? What are the implications of this slippage?

Answer:

a) There were 10 election commitments relating to broadband, communications and the digital economy portfolio:

1. Cyber Safety. (significantly progressed)
2. National Broadband Network. (significantly progressed)
3. Digital Television. (significantly progressed)
4. Abolition of Digital Australia. (implemented))
5. Ensure adequate funding of ABC and SBS. (implemented)
6. Establish a new ABC Board selection process for appointment of board members. (implemented)
7. "Do not call" register funding. (implemented)
8. Improve TV reception in Broadford (Vic), King Island (Tas) and the Makin-Wakefield (SA) area of outer metropolitan Adelaide. (significantly progressed)
9. Cultural diplomacy: rebuild of Radio Australia. (significantly progressed)
10. Amend the ABC charter to mandate minimum levels of Australia drama.
    (The Government provided $185.3 million in the 2009-10 budget to enable the ABC and SBS to produce more Australian programs, news, and local information. The additional funding will significantly boost the ABC's capacity to support Australian drama and gives effect to the intent of the commitment to amend the Charter.

    Amending the Charter of the ABC to require local content production is a matter which the Government will address at an appropriate time).

b) Not applicable.

Question No: 127

Corporate & Business

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Electoral Reports

Senator Fisher asked:

a) Are there plans to publish a full suite of electoral reports on the Department's website? If not, why not? If so, when? What data will be included?
b) Does the Department prepare electorate level reports for Ministers? What data is included in these reports? How often is this updated? Why is this material not publicly available? Request copy of latest reports.
c) Has electoral specific data been used by the current Government in any grants scheme since November 2007?

Answer:

a) No. The Department has not been requested to do so. There is a requirement for agencies to publish details of all grants on their website within seven days of the signing of the grant agreement which includes grant funding location.
b) The Department prepares locality issues briefs on a broad range of departmental programs for the Minister's attendance at Community Cabinet meetings and other regional visits. It also contributes to a locality brief prepared by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet for each Community Cabinet Meeting.
c) Electoral specific data is not part of the assessment criteria of any grants program administered by the department.

Question No: 128

Corporate & Business

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Consultancies

Senator Fisher asked:

a) How much has the Department spent on consultancy services since November 2007? How can the department justify this expenditure?
b) Could the Department provide a complete list of current consultancy services? For each consultancy, please indicate the rationale for the project and its intended use. For each consultancy, please indicate why the Department or its agencies could not have undertaken the work themselves.

Answer:

All agencies subject to the *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997* are required to report procurement contracts awarded where the contract value is $10 000 or more on AusTender, the government's tender and procurement reporting system. From 3 September 2007 departments and agencies have been required to include on AusTender details of those contracts which are consultancies, and the justification for each consultancy. The information sought in relation to DBCDE consultancies valued at $10 000 or more, are available on the AusTender website (www.tenders.gov.au). Please note that departments have six weeks to report procurement contracts on AusTender.

Further details on consultancy expenditure is available in the Department's annual report.

While AusTender and the Annual Report contain details of contracts valued at $10 000 or more, it is considered to be an unreasonable diversion of resources for the Department to provide details of consultancies valued at less than $10 000.

Question No: 129

Corporate & Business

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Advertising and Marketing

Senator Fisher asked:

  a) How much has the Department spent on advertising and marketing since November 2007? Ask for justification of expenditure.
  b) Could the Department provide a complete list of current contracts. Please indicate the rationale for each service provided and its intended use.

Answer:

All agencies subject to the *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997* are required to report procurement contracts awarded where the contract value is $10 000 or more on AusTender, the government's tender and procurement reporting system. The information sought in relation to DBCDE advertising and marketing contracts valued at $10 000 or more, are available on the AusTender website (www.tenders.gov.au). Please note that departments have six weeks to report procurement contracts on AusTender.

Further details on expenditure are available in the Department's annual report.

While AusTender contains details of contracts valued at $10 000 or more and the Annual Report contains details of contracts at $10 900 or more, it is considered to be an unreasonable diversion of resources for the Department to provide details of advertising and marketing contracts below these values.

Question No: 130

Corporate & Business

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Government Advertising

Senator Barnett asked:

a) What communications program has the Department undertaken, or are planning to undertake?
b) For each program, what is the total spend?

Answer:

a)

i) Digital Switchover Campaign 2009-10
The Department is undertaking a Digital Switchover Campaign which will inform the Australian public about what they need to do to switch, when their region will be switching and why we are switching from analog to digital television.

ii) National Cyber Security Awareness Week 2010
National Cyber Security Awareness Week (formerly National E-security Awareness Week) is an annual initiative held in partnership with industry, community and consumer groups and state and territory governments. The week aims to help Australians understand cyber security risks and educate home and small business users on the simple steps they can take to protect their personal and financial information.

iii) Satellite Phone Subsidy
The Satellite Phone Subsidy is an Australian Government initiative to help people living or working outside of terrestrial mobile phone coverage to purchase satellite mobile phones.

b)

i) Digital Switchover Campaign—The spend on Digital Switchover communication in 08-09 was $7.1 million. The amount budgeted in 2009-10 is $23.1 million; in 2010-11 is $22.4 million; and 2011-12 is $13.4 million. Total allocated budget for Digital Switchover communication from 08-09 until December 2011 is $66 million.

ii) Cyber Security Awareness week—The planned spend on the Awareness Week is $252,483 in 2009 – 10.

iii) Satellite Phone Subsidy Scheme—The planned spend on the Satellite Phone Subsidy is $200,000 in 2009 – 10.

Question No: 131

Finance and Budgets

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Discretionary Grants

Senator Fisher asked:

Could the Department provide a list of all discretionary grants, including ad hoc and one-off grants since November 2007? Please provide details of the recipients, the intended use of the grants and what locations have benefited from the grants.

Answer:

The following table lists all discretionary grants for the period 1 November 2007 to 31 December 2008. From 1 January 2009, all grants, discretionary and non-discretionary, made by the Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy (DBCDE) are published on the Departmental website.

No.	Intended Use	Recipient	Location
1	Funding provided to extend the current Clever Networks Cooeenet project to an additional four towns. It included service provision of video conferencing and vital signs monitoring; extraction of patient data from selected GP practices to the Qld Coordination Centre; and piloting of the use of low cost monitoring technologies and communications for remote facilities serviced by the Royal Flying Doctor Service.	Queensland Health	Queensland
2	Funding provided to explore the feasibility of utilising optic fibre links through disused service ducting in the central Launceston area to establish a fibre network linked to TasGovNet, the Tasmanian Governments fibre network. This work was to inform future local government planning.	Department of Economic Development	Tasmania
3	Funding provided to extend mobile communications to major communities in the Ngaanyatjarra lands of Western Australia, building on infrastructure provided under the Co-ordinated Communications Infrastructure Fund and extending two Clever Networks Innovative Service projects (Bush Medivac and Emergency Connect Western Australia).	Department of Industry and Resources	Western Australia

No.	Intended Use	Recipient	Location
4	Funding provided to build on the work of the Western Australia Broadband Project Officer by applying the project learning to other government sectors.	Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Office of e-Government	Western Australia
5	Funding facilitated digital radio related technical planning and policy consultancy services to assist with implementation of digital radio broadcasting by the community radio sector.	Community Broadcasting Foundation Ltd	Sydney, Melbourne, Perth, Brisbane & Adelaide
6	Funding for transitional arrangements for the establishment of a peak body for Telecommunications Consumers.	Consumer Telecommunications Network	New South Wales
7	Funding to represent the interests of residential consumers in the development of the government and industry policy relating to telecommunications and to foster community awareness of telecommunications issues affecting consumers.	Women with Disabilities Australia	Rosny Park, Tasmania
8		Consumer Telecommunications Network	New South Wales
9		Internet Society of Australia	Victoria
10		Deaf Australia Inc	Queensland
11		Australian Federation of Disability Organisations	Victoria
12		Deafness Forum of Australia	Australian Capital Territory
13		Communication Rights Australia	Victoria
14		Small Enterprise Telecommunications Center Ltd	Australian Capital Territory
15	Financial assistance for the purpose of Sitting Fees for participation in the Communications Alliance Consumer Council in 2008-09.	Australian Seniors Computer Clubs Association	New South Wales
16		Australian Telecommunications Users Group	New South Wales
17		Communications Law Centre	Victoria
18		Consumer Telecommunications Network	New South Wales

No.	Intended Use	Recipient	Location
19		Country Women's Association	Emu Park, New South Wales
20		Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils of Australia	Victoria
21		Internet Society of Australia	Australian Capital Territory
22		Small Enterprise Telecommunications Center Ltd	Australian Capital Territory
23		Telecommunications Consumer Group - South Australia	South Australia
24	Financial Assistance for the purpose of Sitting Fees for participation in the Communications Alliance Disability Council in 2008-09.	Australian Rehabilitation and Assistive Technologies Association	South Australia
25		Blind Citizens Australia	Victoria
26		Deaf Australia Inc	Queensland
27		Deafness Forum of Australia	Australian Capital Territory
28		National Council on Intellectual Disability	Australian Capital Territory
29		Physical Disability Council of Australia	New South Wales
30		Australian Federation of Disability Organisations	Victoria
31		Women with Disabilities Australia	Bellerive, Tasmania
32		Australian Federation of Disability Organisations	Victoria

No.	Intended Use	Recipient	Location
33	Grant for the establishment of ACCAN by 30 June 2009 and for research activities.	Australian Communications Consumer Action Network Ltd	New South Wales
34	Improved television reception in the Wye River area through remedial work to the Wye River analog television retransmission facility.	Broadcast Australia Pty Ltd	Wye River and parts of Kennett River and Separation Creek
35	Funding supported the transmission of radio services for the print handicapped provided to listeners across Australia.	RPH Australia	Australia
36	Funding provided transmission support for community broadcasters via subsidised access to Broadcast Australia sites.	Community Broadcasting Foundation Ltd	Australia
37	Funding supported the retransmission of a commercial television service to communities in remote Western Australia.	Golden West Network	Western Australia
38		North West Radio Pty Ltd	Western Australia
39	Funding supported the retransmission of an Indigenous commercial television service accessed as part of the suite of Remote Area Broadcasting Services.	Imparja Television Pty Ltd	Northern Territory
41	For the provision and installation of fixed community phone services, and ongoing line maintenance, in eligible remote Indigenous communities.	Telstra Corporation Ltd	Northern Territory, South Australia & Western Australia
42	Research into and preparation of a report entitled "Assessing the current and potential role of broadband infrastructure and access in community, strengthening of drought-affected small towns and communities".	La Trobe University, Bendigo Campus, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences	Victoria
43	Research into and preparation of a report entitled "Impact of high-speed broadband developments on youth consumption of Internet (online) interactive services and consumer well-being".	Griffith University	Queensland

No.	Intended Use	Recipient	Location
44	This project enabled the implementation of Electronic Medical Records (EMRs) for patients of all Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) operating sections in regional and remote Australia. The EMR will become part of a broader, summary Electronic Health Record leading to improved continuity of care for patients across service providers, across locations and across time. All RFDS operating sections are being linked to a Wide Area Network enabling central storage, access and transfer of data.	Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia	New South Wales, Queensland & Western Australia
45	Funding for the Clinical Outreach Program Hunter New England provided 23 hospital and healthcare facilities with greater access to advanced clinical applications. The project enabled the Hunter New England Area to transition to a complete digital imaging system for radiography services.	Hunter New England Area Health Service	New South Wales
46	Establishment of a network, called ShiresNet, a shared infrastructure and services environment, for eight newly formed Territory Shire Councils, and over 50 Service Delivery Centres, to significantly enhance the delivery of government services across regional and remote areas of the Northern Territory.	Department of Local Government, Housing and Sport	Northern Territory
47	Knowledge Bank: Next Generation used Web 2.0 tools, in a cyber-safe environment, to connect schools to their communities; to enhance education delivery in schools; and to establish global models of learning and teaching. Schools and their communities in rural and remote Victoria benefited from broadband technologies by means of targeted education programs and innovative training opportunities.	Department of Education and Early Childhood Development	Victoria

No.	Intended Use	Recipient	Location
48	Delivery of specialist trauma and critical care support from major Melbourne hospitals and Bendigo Health to regional hospitals in the Loddon Mallee region of Victoria. It used the Virtual Trauma and Critical Care Unit, an advanced virtual clinical care and video conferencing solution, to improve the care of emergency and critical care patients and significantly enhance communication between health care staff across multiple sites.	Loddon Mallee Health Alliance	Victoria
49	The Bush Medivac Western Australia project improved the communication network of health and emergency service agencies and volunteer organisations in regional and remote Western Australia.	Western Australia Department of Commerce	Western Australia
50	This project upgraded the Western Australia Department of Health (DoH) IP network infrastructure to support better health service delivery in regional, rural and remote areas of the state. The project connected 19 additional health delivery sites in rural Western Australia to the DoH IP network. Fifty eight rural health facilities benefited from broadband upgrades. The project enabled health care facilities in remote areas of the state to link into the DoH network and access important medical information, e.g. electronic medical records, radiology images and pathology results, in real time.	West Australian Country Health Services	Western Australia
51	Livewire will facilitate connection, empathy and understanding between people who are experiencing similar situations by offering three customised, safe online communities featuring social networking tools and inspiring content. The Members site is for young people, aged over 10 and under 21, living with a serious illness, chronic health condition or disability; the Siblings site caters for young people, aged over 10 and under 21, who have a brother, sister or parent living with a serious illness, chronic health condition or disability; and the Parents sites is for parents and carers of people living with a serious illness, chronic health condition or disability.	NFPOnline Pty Ltd	Australia

No.	Intended Use	Recipient	Location
52	ConnectCare has provided an integrated suite of applications for remote and regional aged care facilities, primarily in the 50 to 150 bed category, to improve services in the aged sector. The suite of applications has been developed, trialled and tested at four pilot sites.	Church Resources	New South Wales & Queensland
53	The Connecting Victorian Rural Independent Schools project is establishing a network, called VictoriaTOR, providing a managed virtual private network for more than 100 independent schools across rural and regional Victoria. The network provides a secure environment in which students and staff can communicate, deliver on-line learning and access the Internet.	Association of Independent Schools of Victoria	Victoria
54	Funding provided to develop a range of materials including CD-ROMs and manuals, face to face workshops and a webpage specifically designed to raise community awareness on e-security issues as part of the 2008 National e-Security Awareness Week.	Australian Seniors Computer Club Association	Australia
55	Funding provided to deliver 18 workshops in rural and regional New South Wales as part of the 2008 National e-Security Awareness Week.	Community Technology Centres Association	New South Wales

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Question No: 132

Finance and Budgets

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Discretionary Grants – Interim Requirements

Senator Barnett asked:

Has the Department complied with interim requirements relating to the publication of discretionary grants?

Answer:

The Department has complied with the interim requirements relating to the publication of discretionary grants with an exception of two grants, which were not published on the Departmental website within the required seven working days.

Question No: 133

Corporate and Business

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Commissioned Reports

Senator Fisher asked:

a) How many Reports have been commissioned by the Government in communications and broadband since November 2007?

b) Please provide details of each report including date commissioned, date report handed to Government, date of public release, Terms of Reference and Committee members.

c) How much did each report cost? How many departmental staff were involved in each report and at what level?

d) What is the current status of each report? When is the Government intending to respond to these reports?

Answer:

A 'Commissioned Report' was defined as a report commissioned by the Government (ie. the Minister) that may be publically available and have established Terms of Reference.

Please note: Reviews are covered in Question 137.

a) 4

(b) – (d) See attached table

Reports Commissioned by the Government in the Broadband, Communications and Digital Economy Portfolio since November 2007

Name of Report	Date Commissioned	Date Report was Provided to Government	Date of Public Release	Cost of Report (GST exclusive)	Status/ Government Response	Committee Members	Number of Departmental Employees involved and at what level?
National Broadband Network Implementation Study report	Announced as part of the Government's 7 April 2009 NBN announcement. The Lead Adviser was appointed in August 2009.	5 March 2010	Expected to be released by May 2010 Budget night	Departmental expenses to 28 February 2010 total $1,189,921. Consultancy expenses to 28 February 2010 total - $22,211,052 (including payments accrued for services rendered). **Total expenditure to 28 February 2010: $23,400,973.**	Under consideration	A consortium of McKinsey/KPMG was appointed as the Lead Adviser to conduct the Implementation Study oversighted by a Steering Committee of key agencies – DBCDE, DOFD, PM&C and Treasury - and NBN Co.	The number of employees working on the project fluctuated over time and did not work solely on the study. As a result, it is not possible to quantify exact staffing numbers.

Terms of Reference:
As part of the Government's 7 April 2009 NBN announcement, it stated an Implementation Study would be commissioned. Its terms of reference include, amongst other things, the detailed operating arrangements of the company; ownership and structure; ways to attract private sector investment; the longer term privatisation objective; and a detailed financial analysis in support of the Government's objective that the NBN operate as a commercial company. The Implementation Study report was informed by specialist commercial, financial, technical and legal advice and significant stakeholder engagement.

Name of Report	Date Commissioned	Date Report was Provided to Government	Date of Public Release	Cost of Report (GST exclusive)	Status/ Government Response	Committee Members	Number of Departmental Employees involved and at what level?
Review of Telstra Retail Price Control arrangements by the ACCC	23 December 2009	12 March 2010	To be determined	ACCC review; no direct cost to DBCDE.	To be determined	ACCC	N/A

Terms of Reference:

The Minister directed the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) to conduct a review of existing retail price controls applying to Telstra, for the purpose of determining price controls for another two years. The ACCC was to consider: a) the appropriate composition of service baskets and the design and level of price caps; and b) what parts of the current arrangements might benefit from clarification or streamlining. In conducting the enquiry, the ACCC was to have regard to the current state of competition in the relevant markets and the impact of future arrangements on issues such as competition, economically efficient investment, and the quality and availability of services to consumers.

Name of Report	Date Commissioned	Date Report was Provided to Government	Date of Public Release	Cost of Report (GST exclusive)	Status/ Government Response	Committee Members	Number of Departmental Employees involved and at what level?
International mobile roaming charges (KPMG)	March 2008	June 2008	12 August 2008	$71,681	In addition to the Media Release on 12 August 2008, the Government addressed the report in the context of the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Communications Parliamentary Inquiry into international mobile roaming charges.	N/A	Nil (external consultancy)

Terms of Reference:

Research to investigate international roaming charges, any divergences between costs paid by Australian consumers and consumers in other countries, and the reasons for any divergence.

Name of Report	Date Commissioned	Date Report was Provided to Government	Date of Public Release	Cost of Report (GST exclusive)	Status/ Government Response	Committee Members	Number of Departmental Employees involved and at what level?
Feasibility Study into a Telecommunications Disability Equipment Program Independent of Carriers	16 February 2009	2 March 2010	TBA	This review was conducted as part of the normal business of the Department. There were no staff solely allocated to the review and only some costs can be readily identified. Identified consultation costs amount to $7,711.49 as at 8 February 2010.	Receiving consideration	N/A	There were no staff solely allocated to the review.

Terms of Reference:

1. The size and nature of the Australian market for specialised telecommunications equipment including an estimate of the demand for such equipment over the next 5 to 10 years, together with eligibility criteria that should apply to accessing this equipment at standard equipment comparable prices. This will include:
   i   an examination of how provision of specialised telecommunications equipment to people with disabilities is catered for in other comparable countries; and
   ii   the current arrangements in Australia for people with disabilities to obtain specialised equipment, the eligibility criteria that is applied to the provision of such equipment and the process for selecting equipment to include in current disability equipment programs.
2. The types of organisational models that could be established or adapted to deliver an independent disability equipment program including an assessment of the merits of each model proposed.
3. The types of governance structures, such as a board of directors, council, or other structure, that could be put in place to manage the operation of an independent disability equipment program.
4. The types of equipment, software and other technologies that should be included on an independent disability equipment program, including an assessment of whether or not certain types of equipment are available in Australia, and if not whether they should be available.

| 5. | Options for funding an independent disability equipment program, including an assessment of projected costs. |

Question No: 134

Corporate & Business

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Hospitality Expenditure

Senator Barnett asked:

a) What is the Department's hospitality spend financial year to date?

b) Please detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events.

c) For each Minister/Parliamentary Secretary's office, please detail total hospitality spend financial year to date.

d) Please detail date, location, purpose and cost of each event.

Answer:

a) & b)

Details of the Department's hospitality expenditure from 1 July 2009 to 8 March 2010 are in the table below.

Date	Location	Purpose	Cost
17/08/2009	Canberra	Working dinner to discuss International broadband issues	$1300 (inc GST)

c) & d)

There is no hospitality expenditure attributed to the Minister's Office for the period 1 July 2009 to 8 February 2010.

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Question No: 135

Corporate and Business

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Gender Ratios across Boards and Portfolio Agencies

Senator Barnett asked:

What is the gender ratio on each board and across the portfolio?

Answer:

Board Appointments

Consistent with Senate Order of Continuing Effect (Order for the Production of Documents No.13 Departmental and Agency Appointments and Vacancies), the following table reflects the gender ratio of portfolio appointments made by the Government (both former and current) through Executive Council, Cabinet and Minister as at 8 February 2010.

Board	Gender Ratio
Australian Broadcasting Corporation	2 Female:5 Male
Australian Communications and Media Authority	2 Female:7 Male
Australian Postal Corporation	1 Female:6 Male
National Broadband Network Company	2 Female:6 Male
Regional Telecommunications Independent Review Committee	2 Female:3 Male
Special Broadcasting Service	3 Female:5 Male

Employee Statistics across Portfolio Agencies

Australian Broadcasting Corporation, Australian Communications and Media Authority, Australian Postal Corporation and Special Broadcasting Service employee statistics by gender are available in their respective Annual Reports.

As at 28 February 2010 the National Broadband Network Company has advised of the following employee statistics by gender: 18 Female: 68 Male.

Question No: 136

Corporate and Business

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Community Cabinet Meetings

Senator Barnett asked:

a) What was the cost of Ministers travel and expenses for the Community Cabinet meetings held since Budget Estimates?

b) How many Ministerial Staff and Departmental officers travelled with the Minister for the Cabinet meeting?

c) What was the total cost of this travel?

d) What was the total cost to the Department and the Ministers office?

Answer:

The table below outlines details in relation to all nine Community Cabinet Meetings held between May 2009 and 8 February 2010 in relation to the attendance by the Minister for Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, Ministerial and Departmental staff.

NOTE: The acquitted costings are now available for the meeting held in the electorate of Emerald, Victoria (19 May 2009) as they were not available for the May 2009 Estimates hearings.

COMMUNITY CABINET MEETINGS – COSTINGS/ATTENDANCE
Notes
<u>Minister and Ministerial Staff</u>: Unless otherwise indicated, reconciled costings for commercial travel and travel allowance are provided by the Department of Finance and Deregulation (DOFD).
• The figures include airfares and Travelling Allowance (including Motor Vehicle Allowance) claims. They do not include travel by taxis (due to the difficulties determining exact destinations using the electronic information as provided by Cabcharge) or travel on Special Purpose Aircraft (which is administered by the Department of Defence).
<u>Departmental Staff</u>: Costings provided by the Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy are those that are attributable to attendance at Community Cabinet meetings (including airfare, travelling allowance and Comcar/taxis).

Location 2009	Minister	Ministerial Staff	Departmental Staff
Emerald La Trobe VIC 19/5/2009	Minister did not attend - long standing commitment. Minister Tanner Represented.	No Adviser Attended	Secretary Total - $1,559.59
Beenleigh Forde QLD 30/6/09	 Total - $1,894.61	Assistant Adviser Total - $1,277.82	First Assistant Secretary, Broadcasting & Digital Switchover Total - $1603.09
Elizabeth Wakefield SA 28/7/09	 Total - $1,920.25	Media Adviser Total - $1,255.38	A/g Secretary Total - $1709.46
Port Macquarie Lyne NSW 25/8/09	 Total - $1,089.09	Assistant Adviser Total - $1,337.80	Deputy Secretary Total - $634
Geraldton O'Connor WA 01/10/09	Minister did not attend - long standing commitment. Senator Carr represented.	Two Advisers attended Total - $3,543.89	Deputy Secretary Total - $3957.32
Hobart Denison TAS 13/10/09	 Total - $237.95	Assistant Adviser Total - $237.95	Secretary Total - $1,128.79
Bathurst Macquarie NSW 09/11/2009	Minister did not attend – long standing commitment. Minister Albanese represented.	Adviser Total - 1,592.96	Deputy Secretary Total - $254.50
Townsville Herbert QLD 08/12/2009	 Total - $2,329.34	Adviser Total - $1,636.49	Deputy Secretary Total - $2,378.13
Location 2010	Minister	Ministerial Staff	Departmental Staff
Magill Sturt 20/1/2010	Minister on leave. Acting Minister Tanner represented.	No Adviser attended	Deputy Secretary Total - 1,855.13

Question No: 137

Corporate and Business

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Reviews

Senator Barnett asked:

a) How many Reviews are currently being undertaken in the portfolio/agency or affecting the portfolio agency?
b) When will each of these reviews be concluded?
c) Which Reviews have been completed since Budget Estimates?
d) When will the Government be responding to the respective reviews that have been completed?
e) What is the total number of Reviews *both completed and ongoing* in the portfolio/agency or affecting the portfolio agency since November 2007?
f) What is the estimated cost of these Reviews?
g) What further reviews are planned for 2009 - 10 FY?

Answer:

A *statutory* review is defined as an exercise conducted and/or paid for by the Department/Agency that has been undertaken, or is being undertaken, in response to a statutory requirement (i.e. specified by legislation).

Non statutory reviews are defined as reviews not specified by legislation and are conducted as a result of a decision by Government (i.e. the Minister)*.*

a) Statutory Reviews – 7, Non-Statutory Reviews – 2

b) See attached table

c) None

d) N/A

e) 11

f) See attached table

g) A *Review of regional digital radio technologies* may commence in 2009–10. See attached table for details.

Planned, Current and Completed Reviews since November 2007 (as at 8 February 2010)

Name of Review	Specified timelines/duration (b)	Cost (GST exclusive) (f)
Current Reviews		
Statutory		
Review of the duration of the simulcast period	The *Broadcasting Services Act 1992* requires the Minister to cause to be conducted a review of the period during which analog and digital television services are both to be provided, before 1 January 2006. The previous Government did not table a report in relation to this review. The finalisation of a report is subject to the outcomes of a range of policy and regulatory matters being considered by Government. On 5 January 2010 the Government announced its intention to implement a satellite service to achieve switchover by 2013. The report will be revised to take account of the Government's decision to fund a satellite solution for digital television signal deficient areas.	The review has been conducted as part of the normal business of the Department. There are no staff solely allocated to the review and no direct costs can be readily identified.
Review of the conditions relating to operational separation of Telstra	Section 61A of the *Telecommunications Act 1997* provides that before 1 July 2009, the Minister must cause to be conducted a review of the operation of Part 8 of Schedule 1 — operational separation of Telstra. A report of the review must be tabled in each House of Parliament within 15 sitting days of that House after the completion of the report.	The review has been conducted as part of the normal business of the Department. There are no staff solely allocated to the review and no direct costs can be readily identified.
Review of anti-siphoning	The *Broadcasting Services Act 1992* requires the Minister to	The review has been conducted as part of the normal

Name of Review	Specified timelines/duration (b)	Cost (GST exclusive) (f)
provisions	cause to be conducted a review of the anti-siphoning provisions in the Act before 31 December 2009. A report of the review must be tabled in each House of Parliament within 15 sittings days of that House after the completion of the report.	business of the Department. There are no staff solely allocated to the review and no direct costs can be readily identified.
Review of the regulation of program standards and captioning on free to air multi-channelled television broadcasting services	Clause 60C of Schedule 4 to the *Broadcasting Services Act 1992* requires the Minister to cause to be conducted a review on captioning and content rules as they apply to commercial digital television multichannels before 1 January 2010. A report of the review must be tabled in each House of Parliament within 15 sittings days of that House after the completion of the report.	The review has been conducted as part of the normal business of the Department. There are no staff solely allocated to the review and no direct costs can be readily identified.
Review of regional radio localism requirements	Section 61CT of the *Broadcasting Services Act 1992* requires the Minister to cause to be conducted a review of regional radio localism requirements before 4 April 2010. A report of the review must be tabled in each House of Parliament within 15 sittings days of that House after the completion of the report.	The review has been conducted as part of the normal business of the Department. There are no staff solely allocated to the review and no direct would be readily identified.
Review of the Do Not Call Register	The *Do Not Call Register Act 2006* requires the Minister to cause to be conducted a review of the legislation and relevant provisions of the *Telecommunications Act 1997* before or as soon as practicable after 31 May 2010. A report of the review must be tabled in each House of Parliament within 15 sittings days of that House after the	The review has been conducted as part of the normal business of the Department. There are no staff solely allocated to the Review. Associated costs of advertising the discussion paper were $19,943.31.

Name of Review	Specified timelines/duration (b)	Cost (GST exclusive) (f)
	completion of the report.	The review is ongoing and further costs (travel and accommodation for consultation meetings) will be acquitted upon completion of the Review.
Review of Submarine Cable legislation (Schedule 3A *Telecommunications Act 1997*)	Part 5, Clause 89 of the *Telecommunications Act 1997* requires that Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) is to report to the Minister on the operation of Schedule 3A to the Telecommunications Act 1997 within 5 years of the day it commenced. This requires a report to be provided no later than September 2010.	The review has been conducted as part of the normal business of the ACMA. No staff are solely allocated to the review. No additional resources have been allocated to the review.
Non-Statutory		
Review of the current arrangements for identity checks for the purchase of prepaid mobile phone SIM cards (the prepaid review)	Report to Experts Group, chaired by the Department and the Attorney-General's Department, in the first half of 2010.	The review has been conducted as part of the normal business of the Department. There are no staff solely allocated to the review and no direct costs can readily be identified.
Review of access to electronic media by the hearing and vision impaired	No formal reporting date.	The review has been conducted as part of the normal business of the Department. There are no staff solely allocated to the review. The cost of publishing the April 2008 discussion paper in accessible formats included: *Braille $355 (GST not applicable) *Audio $297 The cost of publishing the November 2009 Discussion Report in accessible formats included: *Braille $1390 (GST not applicable) *Audio $573 *Changes to audio files $136
Completed Reviews since November 2007		
Non-Statutory		

Name of Review	Specified timelines/duration (b)	Cost (GST exclusive) (f)
Review of National ICT Australia Limited (NICTA)	July 2008 – March 2009	$63,887.32 (Including sitting fees for panel members, travel allowance and other costs. Does not include any departmental secretariat salaries – part of normal business and no staff were solely allocated.)
Triennial Funding Review of the ABC & SBS	17 April 2008 to 12 May 2009	$437,420 (Does not include any departmental salaries - part of normal departmental business and no staff were allocated solely to this review.)
Planned Reviews (may commence in 2009 – 10 FY)		
Statutory		
Review of regional digital radio technologies	Section 215A of the *Broadcasting Services Act 1992* requires the Minister to cause to be conducted a review of regional digital radio technologies before 1 January 2011. A report of the review must be tabled in each House of Parliament within 15 sittings days of that House after the completion of the report.	The review will be conducted as part of the normal business of the Department. There are no staff solely allocated to the review and no direct cost would be readily identified.

Question No: 138

Corporate & Business

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Consultancies

Senator Barnett asked:

How many consultancies are planned for this calendar year? Have these been published in your Annual Procurement Plan (APP) on the AusTender website and if not why not? In each case please identify the subject matter, duration, cost and method of procurement as above, and the name of the consultant if known.

Answer:

The Department has prepared its Annual Procurement Plan for 2009-10 available at www.tenders.gov.au. This plan identifies 31 expected contract opportunities within this period. This plan was developed on the best information available at the time and is subject to change. The Annual Procurement Plan has been published on AusTender.

Question No: 139

Finance and Budgets

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Efficiency Dividend - Staffing

Senator Barnett asked:

a) Have staffing numbers been reduced as a result of the efficiency dividend and/or other budget cuts?

b) If so, where and at what level?

c) Are there any plans for staff reduction? If so, please advise details ie. reduction target, how this will be achieved, services/programs to be cut etc.

d) What changes are underway or planned for graduate recruitment, cadetships or similar programs? If reductions are envisaged please explain including reasons, target numbers etc.

Answer:

a) & b)
The impact of efficiency dividend, together with all other budget measures, are taken into consideration in developing the annual budget for the Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy (DBCDE). In aggregate, since its formation, the Department's staffing levels have grown.

c) The Department currently has no plans for staff reductions.

d) There are no changes planned for graduate recruitment, cadetships or similar programs.

Question No: 140

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Freedom of Information

Senator Barnett asked:

   a) Has the Department/agency received any advice on how to respond to FOI requests?
   b) How many FOI requests has the Department received?
   c) How many have been granted or denied?
   d) How many conclusive certificates have been issued in relation to FOI requests?

Answer:

   a) No.
   b) The Department received 15 FOI requests between 20 October 2009 and 28 February 2010.
   c) Of the 15 requests received between 20 October 2009 and 28 February 2010, the Department granted access in full to one request; access in part to three requests; refused one request under s.24A (no documents found); and one request was taken to have been withdrawn. The Department is still processing the remaining requests.
   d) The Department has not issued any conclusive certificates in relation to FOI requests.