

**Senate Standing Committee on Economics**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**Treasury Portfolio**

Additional Estimates

10 – 11 February 2010

**Question: aet 159**

**Topic: Staffing – Efficiency Dividend/ Budget Cuts (ABS)**

**Hansard Page: Written**

**Senator EGGLESTON asked:**

1. Have staffing numbers been reduced as a result of the efficiency dividend and/or other budget cuts?
2. If so, where and at what level?
3. 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.
4. 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:**

1. The ABS does not specifically / separately identify any potential staffing reductions in response to efficiency dividends - instead activity is matched to the required resources to deliver required outputs and the level of funding available. The ABS also undertakes continuous improvement activities to ensure effective and efficient achievement of deliverables.

Therefore, whilst there are no specific staff reductions directly attributable to the efficiency dividend, the ABS does manage staffing through natural attrition and through utilisation of non-ongoing staff.

In 2008-09 staffing levels were reduced by around 180 people and this was managed by redeployment, natural attrition and a temporary recruitment freeze. However as a result of increased funding from the Government in the 2009 Budget, the ABS reinstate or expanded the 2009-10 statistical and analytical work program for most of the work programs that we affected by cuts made in 2008-09 and staffing levels have since increased.

The 2010-11 Budget shows the ABS average staffing level at 2,830 people, compared to 2,600 in 2009-10 and 2,873 in 2008-09.

2. Refer to question 1.
3. There are no plans for staffing reductions.
4. The ABS has an annual graduate intake, the number of graduates are determined annually by the operational requirements of each area within the ABS.