

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Additional Estimates

26 February 2014

Question: AET 642

Topic: Legal Costs (AOFM)

Written: 12 March 2014

Senator LUDWIG asked:

642. List all legal costs incurred by the department or agency since 7 September 2013.
- a. List the total cost for these items, broken down by source of legal advice, hours retained or taken to prepare the advice and the level of counsel used in preparing the advice, whether the advice was internal or external
 - b. List cost spend briefing Counsel, broken down by hours spend briefing, whether it was direct or indirect briefing, the gender ratio of Counsel, how each Counsel was engaged (departmental, ministerial)
 - c. How was each piece of advice procured? Detail the method of identifying legal advice

Answer:

642. For the period 7 September 2013 to 5 March 2014, the AOFM spent \$73,533 on external legal services.
- (a) For the period 7 September 2013 to 5 March 2014, the AOFM spent \$35,004 on legal services from the Australian Government Solicitor. This comprised of \$16,490 on the appointment of Computershare as Registry agent, \$3,771 on probity services in relation to an approach to the market for Internal Audit Services and \$14,743 on sun setting of regulations relating to debt management. For the same period the AOFM spent \$38,529 from a private legal firm, relating to a transmutation facility. The legal costs were done on a time and materials basis, at an agreed rate, and billed accordingly.
- (b) Nil
- (c) Legal advice from the Australian Government Solicitor (AGS) in regard to Computershare and sunsetting of regulations relating to debt management was via limited tender. The probity services for the Internal Audit contract and the legal advice for the transmutation facility was via the Legal Services Multi User Listing. The legal costs for all legal advice obtained by the AOFM was done on a time and materials basis at an agreed rate and billed accordingly.