

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

TREASURY

Australian Taxation Office

Budget Estimates 2 June 2009

Question **bet 2**
Topic: **Link to stimulus package website**
Hansard Page: **Written**

Senator Abetz asked:

With reference to the link to www.economicstimulus.gov.au on the ATO website page <http://www.ato.gov.au/corporate/content.asp?doc=/content/00178930.htm&page=1&H1>.

Who requested that this link be put on?

When was the link put on?

Who approved the link being put on?

Was the approval given in the first instance of the request? If not, why not?

Had the person who gave approval viewed www.economicstimulus.gov.au before this approval?

Answer:

Background

The homepage of www.ato.gov.au is a conduit for around 12 million individual taxpayers, 2.5 million businesses and 25,000 tax agents. It is designed as a point of entry for a diverse community.

The Tax Office often links from ato.gov.au web pages to other websites to give the community a wider, whole-of-government perspective and to provide additional information on a topic or measure which is not covered by Tax Office web content.

Who requested that this link be put on? When was the link put on?

On Friday 20 March 2009, the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM & C) informed agencies involved in implementing economic stimulus plan measures that the Economic Stimulus Plan (ESP) website was now live, and asked that information about the ESP website be placed on agency websites. An ESP branded hotlink button was provided for this purpose.

The Tax Office agreed to provide a text link to the ESP site and to investigate the suitability of using the branded hotlink button subject to advice from our brand and web publishing teams.. A link to the ESP website was published on the ATO website on 25 March 2009.

Who approved the link being put on?

The request was approved by the Tax Bonus Payments Project Leader in consultation with the Campaign Manager.

Was the approval given in the first instance of the request? If not, why not?

See above.

After the link had been installed, there was further discussion between the Tax Office and PM&C about the proposed ESP branded hotlink button to link the two websites.

Following advice that there were no brand or publishing issues, the Tax Office agreed to place the hotlink button on the tax bonus overview page and it was published on 20 April 2009. This was approved by Second Commissioner of Taxation, Compliance. This decision also took into account the large number of people being referred from the Tax Office site to the ESP site and that including the button would make it easier for the community to find information about the ESP.

Had the person who gave approval viewed www.economicstimulusplan.gov.au before this approval?

The Project Leader and Campaign Manager were familiar with the site prior to the original request being made.

The content on www.economicstimulusplan.gov.au was discussed with the Second Commissioner of Taxation, Compliance, prior to approval of the addition of the hotlink button.