

**Senate Standing Committee on Economics**  
**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
Innovation, Industry, Science and Research Portfolio  
Budget Estimates Hearing 2010-11  
31 May 2010

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**AGENCY/DEPARTMENT:** IP AUSTRALIA

**TOPIC:** Patents

**REFERENCE:** Written Question – Senator Heffernan

**QUESTION No.:** BI-44

I understand that IP Australia has had a major reform process running through the year. What action has IP Australia taken to ensure that innovating Australian firms which might be negatively affected by other people's patents were able to provide input to this review process? Were the discussion papers made available on IP Australia's website and are they still there? Were advertisements taken out in the commercial/trade newspapers and magazines? What proportion of the people/institutions to whom the papers were sent earn a living from the Australian patent system, either through ownership of patent monopolies or through charging fees to help others to acquire patent monopolies?

**ANSWER**

IP Australia has conducted two rounds of full public consultation on the proposed reforms. The first round commenced in March 2009 and was completed in October 2009. The second round commenced in November 2009 and was completed in March 2010.

Both rounds included:

- publication of a series of consultation papers on IP Australia's website—these papers are still on the website;
- direct emailing or mailing of the papers to a wide range of stakeholders—over one hundred and fifty representatives from business, industry, the research community, academics and legal professionals;
- a series of roundtable meetings with stakeholders in each of the mainland State capitals (attendees included innovating Australian firms); and
- notification via IP Australia's subscription 'news' service (email subscription list).

Advertisements were not taken out in the commercial/trade newspapers and magazines.

The breakdown of who the papers were distributed to is as follows:

Industry and Innovators	43 %	(79/184)
Research and academics	24 %	(44/184)
IP and legal professionals	22 %	(41/184)
Government agencies	10 %	(18/184)
Economists	1 %	(2/184)

\* 184 refers to the number of individuals and organisations to whom the papers were sent.