

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Resources, Energy and Tourism Portfolio

Budget Senate Estimates

31 May 2011

Question: BR28
Topic: Corporate – Australian Solar Institute
Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Abetz asked:

1. Staffing

- 1.1 How many permanent staff recruited this FYTD?
- 1.2 What classification are these staff?
- 1.3 How many temporary positions exist or have been created this FYTD?
- 1.4 This FYTD, how many employees have been employed on contract and what is the average length of their employment period?

Answer:

- 1.1 Two permanent staff were recruited this financial year.
- 1.2 Of the seven staff employed by ASI, three are employed on salary packages equivalent to Senior Executive Service levels, one employed on the equivalent to a senior graded position, and the other three are employed at levels equivalent to junior graded positions.
- 1.3 One part-time temporary contractor utilised this year.
- 1.4 No employees have been employed on contract during the FYTD.

2. Staffing-Efficiency Dividend/Budget Cuts

- 2.1 Have staffing numbers been reduced as a result of the efficiency dividend and/or other budget cuts?
- 2.2 If so, where and at what classification?
- 2.3 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.
- 2.4 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:

- 2.1 The efficiency dividend is not applicable to ASI as it is a wholly-owned Commonwealth company and does not receive any direct appropriation.
- 2.2 Not applicable.

- 2.3 The ASI has no plans for staff reduction.
- 2.4 The ASI have no changes planned or underway for graduate recruitment, cadetships or similar programs.

3. Government Advertising

What communications programs has the Department/Agency undertaken, or are planning to undertake? For each program, what is the total spend?

Answer:

- 3. The ASI have not undertaken any formal communication programs during the FYTD. However, the total cost of general communication activities for FY2011 = c. \$150,000.

4. Hospitality and Entertainment

- 4.1 What is the Department's hospitality spend FYTD? Please detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events.
- 4.2 For each Minister and Parliamentary Secretary office, please detail total hospitality spend FYTD.
- 4.3 Please detail date, location, purpose and cost of each event.
- 4.4 What is the Department's entertainment spend FYTD?
- 4.5 Please detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events.
- 4.6 For each Minister and Parliamentary Secretary office, please detail total entertainment spend FYTD.
- 4.7 Please detail date, location, purpose and cost of each event.

Answer:

- 4. The ASI has not spent any funds on official hospitality or entertainment for the FYTD.

5. Board Appointments

- 5.1 What is the gender ratio on each board and across the portfolio?
- 5.2 Please detail any board appointments for the FYTD.

Answer:

- 5.1 The ASI Board has 1 female and 5 male non-executive directors.
- 5.2 No new appointments, two directors terms extended.

6. Freedom of Information

- 6.1 Has the Department/agency received any advice on how to respond to FOI requests?
- 6.2 How many FOI requests has the Department received?

- 6.3 How many have been granted or denied?
- 6.4 How many conclusive certificates have been issued in relation to FOI requests?

Answer:

- 6. The ASI has not received any advice on how to respond to FOI requests and has not received any FOI requests during the FYTD.

7. Community Cabinet

- 7.1 What was the cost of Ministers' travel and expenses for the Community Cabinet meetings held this FYTD?
- 7.2 How many Ministerial Staff travelled with the Minister for the Cabinet meeting? What was the total cost of this travel?
- 7.3 How many Departmental officers travelled with the Minister for the Cabinet meeting? What was the total cost of this travel?
- 7.4 What was the total cost to the Department and the Ministers office?

Answer:

- 7. No ASI staff have travelled with the Minister for any Community Cabinet meetings.

8. Reviews

- 8.1 How many Reviews are currently being undertaken by all departments and agencies in each portfolio?
- 8.2 When will each of these reviews be concluded?
- 8.3 What reviews have been concluded FYTD?
- 8.4 Which of these reviews has been provided to Government?
- 8.5 When will the Government be responding to the respective reviews that have been completed?
- 8.6 What is the estimated cost of each of these Reviews?
- 8.7 What further reviews are planned for 2010 - 11 FY?

Answer:

- 8. No reviews have been undertaken by the ASI.

9. Consultancies

- 9.1 How many consultancies have been undertaken or are underway this FYTD? Please identify the name of the consultant, the subject matter of the consultancy, the duration and cost of the arrangement, and the method of procurement (ie. open tender, direct source, etc). Please also include total value for all consultancies.

- 9.2 Does each department and agency stand by its current tenders on the Austenders website? Have any changes or corrections been made for any tenders advertised on to Government Tenders website(www.tenders.gov.au) for tenders advertised this financial year? Explain. Are up to date with reporting requirements?
- 9.3 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:

- 9.1 One consultancy is underway:
Dr Gabby Ostrogay
Consulting and advice on human resources management
Direct Source
Expected total value = \$35,000
- 9.2 ASI is not required to use AusTender.
- 9.3 There are no further consultancies currently planned for the calendar year.

10. Media Monitoring

- 10.1 What was the total cost of media monitoring services, including press clippings, electronic media transcripts etcetera, provided to the Minister's office FYTD?
- 10.2 Which agency or agencies provided these services?
- 10.3 What was the total cost of media monitoring services, including press clippings, electronic media transcripts etcetera, provided to the Department and its agencies in FYTD?
- 10.4 Which agency or agencies provided these services?

Answer:

10. The ASI did not purchase any media monitoring services for the FYTD.

11. Social Media

Has there been any changes to department and agency social media or protocols about staff access and usage of Youtube; online social media, such as Facebook, MySpace and Twitter; and access to online discussions forums and blogs since October 2010? Please explain.

Answer:

11. The ASI has not changed any social media protocols since October 2010.

12. Contractors

- 12.1 Has the department/agency ever employed Hawker Britton in any capacity or is it considering employing Hawker Britton? If yes, provide details.
- 12.2 Has the department/agency ever employed Shannon's Way in any capacity or is it considering employing Shannon's Way? If yes, provide details.
- 12.3 Has the department/agency ever employed John Utting & UMR Research Group in any capacity or is it considering employing John Utting & UMR Research Group? If yes, provide details.
- 12.4 Has the department/agency ever employed McCann-Erickson in any capacity or is it considering employing McCann-Erickson? If yes, provide details.
- 12.5 Has the department/agency ever employed Cutting Edge in any capacity or is it considering employing Cutting Edge? If yes, provide details.
- 12.6 Has the department/agency ever employed Ikon Communications in any capacity or is it considering employing Ikon Communications? If yes, provide details.
- 12.7 Has the department/agency ever employed CMAX Communications in any capacity or is it considering employing CMAX Communications? If yes, provide details.
- 12.8 Has the department/agency ever employed Boston Consulting Group in any capacity or is it considering employing Boston Consulting Group? If yes, provide details.
- 12.9 Has the department/agency ever employed McKinsey & Company in any capacity or is it considering employing McKinsey & Company? If yes, provide details.

Answer:

- 12. ASI has not engaged any of the organisations listed.

13 Discretionary Grants

- 13.1 Could the Department provide a list of all discretionary grants, including ad hoc and one-off grants FYTD? Please provide details of the recipients, the intended use of the grants and what locations have benefited from the grants.
- 13.2 Has the Department complied with interim requirements relating to the publication of discretionary grants?

Answer:

13. In November 2010 ASI announced a total of \$21.6m of solar research & development grants, including:

University of New South Wales, Low-Cost Solar Silicon	\$1,119,960
University of Sydney, Upconversion of the solar spectrum for improved PV energy conversion	\$487,584
University of Melbourne, Printing Solar Cells – A manufacturing proposition for Australia	\$1,762,500
Australian National University, Industry Ready n-type Silicon Solar Cells	\$3,335,254
University of New South Wales, The Hot Carrier Solar Cell	\$563,906
University of New South Wales, Tandem Quantum Dot Solar Cells	\$1,375,000
CSG Solar, Next Generation Crystalline Silicon on Glass Modules	\$1,250,600
University of New South Wales, 40% Efficient Photovoltaic “Power Cube” Power Tower Receiver	\$550,000
CSIRO, Solar Powered Air Turbine Systems	\$3,055,000
Australian National University, Roof mounted hybrid CST system for distributed generation of heating, cooling and electricity	\$3,235,710
Graphite Energy, Graphite Energy Solar Storage	\$1,835,000
CSIRO, A Novel Thermoelectric Topping Cycle Receiver for CST Applications	\$2,200,912
CSIRO, Characterising the Effect of High Penetration Solar Intermittency on Australian Electricity Networks	\$400,000
University of New South Wales, Forecasting and Characterising Grid Connected Solar Energy and Developing Synergies with Wind	\$470,284

14. Commissioned Reports

- 14.1 How many Reports have been commissioned by the Government in your portfolio FYTD? Please provide details of each report including date commissioned, date report handed to Government, date of public release, Terms of Reference and Committee members.
- 14.2 How much did each report cost? How many departmental staff were involved in each report and at what level?
- 14.3 What is the current status of each report? When is the Government intending to respond to these reports?

Answer:

14. No reports have been commissioned in this financial year.

15. Cabinet and Sub-Cabinet Committee Meetings

- 15.1 How much time is spent preparing papers/submissions for Cabinet and Sub-Cabinet Committee meetings?
- 15.2 How often must papers/submissions for Cabinet and Sub-Cabinet Committee Meetings be redrafted or resubmitted? Please provide example of why this would happen. (i.e. last minute policy changes or redate papers due to items not being discussed when initially scheduled).

Answer:

15. ASI has not spent any time preparing papers/submissions for Cabinet or Sub-Cabinet Committee meetings.

16. Government Payment of Accounts

- 16.1 Has the department/agency paid its accounts to contractors/consultants etc in accordance with Government policy in terms of time for payment (i.e. within 30 days)? If not, why not, and what has been the timeframe for payment of accounts? Please provide a breakdown, average statistics etc as appropriate to give insight into how this issue is being approached.)
- 16.2 For accounts not paid within 30 days, is interest being paid on overdue amounts and if so how much has been paid by the portfolio/department agency for the current financial year and the previous financial year?
- 16.3 Where interest is being paid, what rate of interest is being paid and how is this rate determined?

Answer:

16. All accounts have been paid in accordance with current policy.

17. Government Stationery Requirements

What are the government (Ministers/Parliamentary Secretaries) stationery requirements in your portfolio (i.e. special type of paper, envelopes)?

What are the costs of these items?

Is the Department/portfolio agencies paying for these?

Answer:

17. Not applicable.

18. Media Subscriptions

- 18.1 Does your department or agencies within your portfolio subscribe to pay TV (for example Foxtel)? If yes, please provide the reason why, the cost and what channels
- 18.2 Does your department or agencies within your portfolio subscribe to newspapers? If yes, please provide the reason why, the cost and what newspapers.
- 18.3 Does your department or agencies within your portfolio subscribe to magazines? If yes, please provide the reason why, the cost and what magazines.

Answer:

- 18.1 The ASI does not subscribe to pay TV.
- 18.2 The ASI does not subscribe to newspapers.
- 18.3 The ASI does not subscribe to magazines.

19. Travel Costs

- 19.1 For the FYTD, please detail all travel (itemised separately) undertaken by your portfolio Minister and Parliamentary Secretaries. Include what sum was spent on travel, accommodation, security, food, beverages (alcohol listed separately), gifts, entertainment, and all other expenses.
- 19.2 For the FYTD, please provide the same information (itemised separately) for any Minister and Parliamentary staff that accompanied the Minister and Parliamentary on their travel and include a similar breakdown of the costs incurred by or on behalf of those staff.
- 19.3 For the FYTD, please provide the same information (itemised separately) for Departmental officers that accompanied the Minister and Parliamentary Secretary on their travel and include a similar breakdown of the costs incurred by or on behalf of those staff.

Answer:

19. Details of Minister's and staff travel provided in BR24. No ASI staff has accompanied Minister Ferguson on his travel.

20. Legal Costs

- 20.1 What sum did each portfolio department and agency spend on legal services FYTD within the department and agency? Please provide a list of each service and costs.
- 20.2 What sum did each portfolio department and agency spend on legal services FYTD from the Australian Government Solicitor? Please provide a list of each service and costs.
- 20.3 What sum did each portfolio department and agency spend on legal services FYTD from private firms? Please provide a list of each service and costs.
- 20.4 What sum did each portfolio department and agency spend on legal services FYTD from other sources? Please provide a list of each service and costs.

Answer:

20. Minter Ellison, approx. \$70,000 for the year, for drafting and review of legal contracts with grant recipients, and general legal advice on issues such as intellectual property, employment contracts etc.

21. Education Costs

Please detail all education expenses (i.e. in house courses and tertiary studies) for each portfolio department and agency. Include what type of course, the cost and how many participants.

Answer:

21. The ASI has not incurred any education costs for the FYTD.

22. Executive Coaching and Leadership Training

- 22.1 In relation to the purchase of executive coaching and/or other leadership training services purchased by each portfolio department and agency, please provide the following information FYTD:
1. Total spending on these services
 2. The number of employees offered these services and their employment classification
 3. The number of employees who have utilised these services and their employment classification
 4. The names of all service providers engaged
- 22.2 For each service purchased from a provider listed under (4), please provide:
- a) The name and nature of the service purchased
 - b) Whether the service is one-on-one or group based
 - c) The number of employees who received the service and their employment classification
 - d) The total number of hours involved for all employees
 - e) The total amount spent on the service
 - f) A description of the fees charged (i.e. per hour, complete package)
- 22.3 Where a service was provided at any location other than the department or agency's own premises, please provide:
- i. The location used
 - ii. The number of employees who took part on each occasion
 - iii. The total number of hours involved for all employees who took part
 - iv. Any costs the department or agency's incurred to use the location

Answer:

22. \$5,778 spent in September 2010 on media training for ASI Executive Director (Mark Twidell) and ASI Chair (Jenny Goddard). The service provider was Kreab & Gavin Anderson, Sydney office. Payment was for a complete package of media training services, including research and preparation for a full day of one-on-one personal training for each employee, plus prior research and development time for creation of corporate media strategy on key messages etc.

23. Paid Parental Leave

- 23.1 Please list how many staff in each portfolio department and agency are eligible to receive payments under the Government's Paid Parental Leave scheme?
- 23.2 Please list which portfolio department and agencies are providing its employees with payments under the Government's Paid Parental Leave scheme? Please list how many staff are in receipt of these payments.

Answer:

- 23.1 No ASI staff is currently eligible for the Government's Paid Parental Leave scheme.
- 23.2 No ASI staff is receiving payments under the Government's Paid Parental Leave scheme.

24. Workpoint Space

For each portfolio department and agency office please list the occupied workpoint space allocated per person.

Does this adhere to the Government's Commonwealth Property Management Guidelines (the Guidelines)? Explain. If yes, please explain if any refurbishment was required to meet the Guidelines and what the costs were.

a. What savings did each portfolio department and agency achieve by meeting the Guidelines?

Please itemise each portfolio department and agency separately.

b. How much of these savings has each portfolio department and agency kept? Please itemise each portfolio department and agency separately. If no, please give details why it does not, including whether an exemption has been received by the Finance Minister.

a. What funding has been taken from each portfolio department and agency because they do not meet the Guidelines? Please itemise each portfolio department and agency separately.

b. Are there plans to meet the Guidelines? Please explain.

Answer:

24. ASI is not bound by these Guidelines.