

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

TREASURY

Australian Taxation Office

(Supplementary Budget Estimates 1-2 November 2006)

Question **SBT 106**

Topic: **WORK DONE BY DBM CONSULTANTS**

Hansard Page: **E91**

Senator Sherry asked:

In relation to consultant and advertising costs, DBM Consultants undertook six projects with a combined worth of \$725,000. From the statements in appendix 10, it is not totally clear to me what they were doing.

Mr D'Ascenzo—*In relation to the other question, I have nothing other than what is in the annual report. It comes from our ATO relations area and I will have to take that on notice and provide more detail about what services they provided.*

Senator SHERRY—*If you could. In one case there it has 'Undertake evaluation research for the super choice campaign', \$319,000. Would that have included some sort of focus group analysis? Do you know?*

Mr D'Ascenzo—*No, I do not, but I can get specific details of what they did and make that available.*

Senator SHERRY—*In the response to the questions on notice, could you perhaps indicate in that case and also in the 'Conduct proper testing for the super choice campaign' whether there were any focus group research documents that were produced.*

Mr D'Ascenzo—*Yes.*

Answer:

The value of projects undertaken by DBM Consultants in 2005/06 was \$708,080. The six projects were:

Project	Value
1. Super Choice campaign research	\$319,000
2. Super Choice product testing	\$26,660
3. Fuel tax credit reform research	\$178,700
4. Call centre satisfaction research	\$87,320
5. <i>Compliance program 2005-06</i> booklet research	\$78,900
6. Short messaging service evaluation	\$17,500

1. Super choice campaign research and

2. Super choice product testing

The research objectives were to gain an understanding of employers and employees attitudes towards Choice, likely behaviours when implementing Choice and preferred sources for receiving information about Choice. The findings were used to develop the Choice public education campaign.

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This research consisted of a qualitative phase (including focus groups conducted in Melbourne, Perth and Ballarat, 16 in-depth telephone interviews conducted among NESB and focus groups with indigenous employees and employers), several quantitative phases (including benchmarking and tracking surveys) and product testing research of the advertising creatives, forms, booklets and website.

3. Fuel tax credit research

The purpose of this research was to gain an understanding of the attitude and knowledge of the fuel tax credit and the information needs and preferences of existing and potential clients. The findings were used to communicate changes to the fuel tax credit system.

The project included benchmark research, concept/product testing and tracking/evaluation research.

4. Call centre satisfaction research

This research explored the level of client satisfaction with the Tax Office call centres. The research consisted of a benchmark survey, two focus groups and a tracking survey.

5. *Compliance program 2005-06* booklet research

This research assessed the effectiveness of this publication in communicating our annual compliance programme.

The research included a qualitative stage (comprising three focus groups with Tax Agents in Melbourne, Sydney and Wodonga, a mix of face to face and telephone interviews with twelve stakeholders in Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra and four focus groups with Tax Office staff in Canberra, Melbourne and Sydney) and a national telephone survey of 1,000 tax agents.

6. Short messaging service evaluation

This research assessed the impact and effectiveness of using Short Messaging Service (SMS) as an outbound communication channel. The research consisted of a quantitative survey.