Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education Portfolio
Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearing 2012-13
17 October 2012

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY, INNOVATION, SCIENCE, RESEARCH AND TERTIARY EDUCATION

TOPIC: Electricity costs

REFERENCE: Written Question – Senator McKenzie

QUESTION No.: SI-120

1. For the financial year 2011-2012, how many kilowatt hour of electricity did the department consume? What was the total cost?
2. What does this cost work out to per employee?
3. What increases in electricity costs has the Department experienced since the introduction of the carbon tax?
4. How has this changed the Department's spending pattern? What programs or services have been cut to meet the increased costs?
5. What measures is the Department taking to reduce its electricity expenditure? When did these commence? What impact have they had?

ANSWER:

1. The known electricity usage for 2011-12 was **12,676,833** kWh at a total cost of **$1,830,902.26**. These figures do not include sites where electricity costs are incorporated into lease outgoings and are not separately identifiable. They also exclude electricity usage associated with functions and staff transferred to the department as a part of the December 2011 machinery of government changes.

2. As at 30 June 2012, there were 2337 employees located in the sites on which the response to question 1 was based. Therefore the estimated cost per person is **$783.34**.

3. The table below outlines the department's kilowatt hour (kWh) usage, total and average costs per kWh for the July/August/September quarter in 2011 and 2012. Electricity increases incorporate energy, network, environmental, market, metering and other charges.

	kWh	**$**	**Average cost Per kWh ($)**
July/August/Sept 2011	2,066,508	290,930	0.19
July/August/Sept 2012	2,118,251	365,521	0.22

4. The Department manages price fluctuations in a range of corporate expenses each year, changes in electricity costs and other corporate expenses will be managed within the department's overall budget.

5. The Department is required to report on and meet the Energy Efficiency in Government Operations (EEGO) policy target for office tenant light and power of 7500mj/person/annum. In the latest reporting year 2010-2011 the department is below the target, 4970mj/person/annum. The department's main site in Canberra, Industry House has improved the NABERS tenancy rating from 3.5 to 4.5 stars. In 2012 the department undertook a lighting luminaire retrofit to improve the energy performance of the Perth tenancy from a current indicative NABERS energy rating of 1 star to approximately 2.4 stars. Questacon has seen a 41 per cent reduction in electricity usage between 2002 and 2012 via initiatives including, replacement of gallery, back of house and external lights with energy efficient fittings and replacement of electrical and air-conditioning controls.