

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Additional Estimates 2013-2014**

Cross Portfolio

Department of Employment Question No. EM0337_14

Senator Ludwig provided in writing.

Question

Freedom of Information - requests

- 1) Can the department please outline the process it undergoes to access Freedom of Information requests?
- 2) Does the department consult or inform the Minister when it receives Freedom of Information requests?
 - a. If so, when?
 - b. If so, how does this occur?
- 3) Does the department consult or inform other departments or agencies when it receives Freedom of Information requests?
 - a. If so, which departments or agencies?
 - b. If so, when?
 - c. If so, how does this occur?
- 4) Does the department consult or inform the Minister when or before it makes a decision on a Freedom of Information request?
 - a. If so, when?
 - b. If so, how does this occur?
- 5) Does the department consult or inform other departments or agencies when or before it makes a decision on a Freedom of Information request?
 - a. If so, which departments or agencies?
 - b. If so, when?
 - c. If so, how does this occur?

Answer

The management of FOI requests made to the Department of Employment is centralised within the department's Information Law Team. All FOI requests made to the department are processed in accordance with the requirements of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

The Information Law team provides regular reports to the Minister on the department's performance in handling FOI requests, and keeps the Minister updated on relevant matters, as appropriate. This was a long standing practice in the former DEEW.

The department's processes include consulting other parties, including other departments, prior to making a decision on an FOI request where documents falling within the scope of an FOI request have originated from that other party, or the subject matter of the documents relates to the functions and activities of another department or agency.