

**Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace
Relations**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2010-2011**

Cross Portfolio

DEEWR Question No.EW0059_11

Senator Barnett provided in writing.

Question

GOVERNMENT PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

"Has the portfolio/agency paid its accounts to contractors/consultants etc in accordance with Government policy in terms of time for payment (ie. 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.) 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? Where interest is being paid, what rate of interest is being paid and how is this rate determined?"

Answer

The department does not separately identify timeliness statistics for invoices for contractors and consultants. In 2009-10 90.8 per cent (or 29,908) departmental invoices were paid within 30 days.

The department does not collect reasons for the delay for each individual invoice however; the reasons for non-payment within 30 days vary from time delays due to the department obtaining adequate evidence that goods and services have been provided, delays in administrative processes such as obtaining relevant departmental approvals and insufficient information being provided on the invoice. For 2009-10 with the commencement of a new financial system some delays were experienced as contract records were established.

Interest is payable of overdue amounts upon the rendering of an appropriate tax invoice. No payments have been made in respect of interest for overdue amounts in either 2009-10 or 2010-11.