

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2003-2004 SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome: 1

Output Group: 1.4 – Assistance for transition through and from school

DEST Question No. E330_04

Senator Carr asked on 5 November 2003

Question:

The decision to take ECEF back into the Dept was taken in the 2003 Budget context, wasn't it? In 2002-03 you let a contract to Ernst and Young for accounting services 'in respect of the ECEF'. Explain it? What accounting services were required? Presumably it was connected to its return to DEST? In what way?

Answer:

Enterprise and Career Education Foundation (ECEF)

Yes. In the 2003-04 Budget context, the Australian Government made a decision to bring the operations of ECEF closer to government (page 43 of the 2003-04 Portfolio Budget Statements).

To assist with this process, Ernst and Young were commissioned to provide accounting services in relation to the transfer of business from ECEF to government and the wind up of the company. The contract was awarded after a select tender process.

Ernst and Young were contracted to:

- o conduct a financial investigation and prepare a Financial Report on the financial status of ECEF;
- o provide a full schedule of ECEF's financial commitments outlining the total value and timing of disbursements;
- o examine the whole of the financial business records of ECEF in order to determine the financial status of ECEF;
- o assist with the preparation of ECEF's Financial Statutory Accounts for the year ending 30 June 2003 and Directors' Report for the financial year ended 30 June 2003;
- o assist with the preparation of ECEF's Financial Statutory Accounts for the period from 30 June 2003 until deregistration;
- o assist with exiting the lease of the ECEF premises; and
- o assist with the deregistration of ECEF.