

Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Legislation Committee
QUESTIONS ON NOTICE—ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES, 23 FEBRUARY 2011
Defence portfolio: Department of Veterans' Affairs

Q No.	Program: Division or Agency	Senator	Broad topic	Question	Proof Hansard, page & hearing date or Written Q	Date answer rec'd	Date tabled
1	General	Ronaldson	AWM – Correspondence in relation to additional funding for the memorial	Senator RONALDSON —Mr Campbell, could you please take on notice to provide me with any correspondence between the minister, the department, any other department or the memorial in relation to the question of funding and additional funding for the memorial. Mr Campbell —Yes, certainly.	113	19.04.11 20.04.11	23/06/11
2	General	Ronaldson	AWM Finances	Will the Department provide all correspondence between the Department, and/or the present and former Minister, and /or other ministers (including the Prime Minister) and government departments and the Australian War Memorial relating to the Australian War Memorial's finances?	Written	19.04.11	23/06/11
3	General	Ronaldson	Ray Brown - Processing of Permanent Impairment Claims	Senator RONALDSON —Just on that matter, Mr Brown from the Injured Service Persons Association has contacted me suggesting there was only one person in the military rehabilitation and compensation group in Sydney processing permanent impairment claims; is that correct? I understand that Mr Brown has asked some questions about staffing in these areas; have you responded? Mr Campbell —It is not correct in the way that Ray articulated that. I actually responded to that letter today, so if you would like I will give you a copy of my response to him. Senator RONALDSON —I am sure Mr Brown would not be unhappy with that. Whether you want to check with him first, but I think that might be useful. Mr Campbell —Given that he actually circulated his letter to you and to Minister Stone, but I check with Ray and I think the letter will answer most of the issues.	116	05.04.11 19.04.11	23/06/11
4	General	Ronaldson	AWM Reappointment	Senator RONALDSON —Can I ask whether the date that you were advised of this will be made public after the official announcement is made, presumably after tonight, probably tomorrow morning? Will you take on notice, Parliamentary Secretary, as to when General Gower was advised of his appointment? Because in the context of this current debate in relation to funding and who said what when, I actually think it is quiet important.	125	19.04.11	23/06/11

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5	General	Ronaldson	2010-11 PBS and PAES	<p>1. The PBS and the PAES for 2010-11 show significant variation in staffing numbers across the Department's three outcomes.</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: 40px;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Outcome 1</th> <th>Outcome 2</th> <th>Outcome 3</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2009-10 Estimated</td> <td>1,020</td> <td>824</td> <td>118</td> <td>1,934</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2009-10 Actual</td> <td>1,130</td> <td>686</td> <td>126</td> <td>1,942</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2010-11 Estimated</td> <td>992</td> <td>801</td> <td>114</td> <td>1,907</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>a) For outcome 1: in 2009-10, estimated figure was 1,020 and the actual figure was 1,130; in 2010-11, this figure is expected to be 992. b) For outcome 2: in 2009-10, the actual figure was 686, compared with the May expectation of 824. The 2010-11 figure between the PBS and the PAES remains the same at 801. c) For outcome 3: in 2009-10, the actual figure was 126, up from the 118 estimated in May. The 2010-11 figure is unchanged at 114. d) This gives a total actual staff, on these figures, of 1,942 actual vs. 1,934 estimated in 2009-10, and 1,907 staff estimated to be involved in the three outcomes over this year.</p> <p>2. How can you employ more staff across the three outcomes, but have reduced staff expenses shown in Table 3.2.1a? a) There were eight more staff 'actually' employed than were 'estimated' to be employed in FY 2009-10, yet staff expenses were \$4.36m less than expected. b) When the Budget was presented in May last year, in FY 2009-10, the estimated "employee benefit expenses" was \$182,535,000. c) When the Additional Estimates Statement was tabled this month, the actual "employee benefits expenses" was \$178,168,000.</p> <p>3. Can the Department also confirm the number of staff presently engaged in the collation of 'Nominal Roll' data and the present work they are undertaking.</p>		Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Total	2009-10 Estimated	1,020	824	118	1,934	2009-10 Actual	1,130	686	126	1,942	2010-11 Estimated	992	801	114	1,907	Written	19.04.11	23/06/11
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6	1	Ronaldson	IDC – Anzac Centenary Commemorations	<p>Senator RONALDSON—So was the commission discussed with PMAC or the round table, prior to its announcement? Mr Campbell—Not with the round table, and I could not speak for sure, because the then Minister had his own conversations with PMAC, so I could not speak for what conversations the Minister— Senator RONALDSON—Just take that on notice for me. Who is formally represented on the Commission?</p>	120	19.04.11	23/06/11																				

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7	1.2	Ronaldson	Disability Pension Reform	With regards to the costings provided for disability pension reform: a) How many staff were involved in the preparation of the answer to Senator Kroger's question about this in May last year? b) How many staff were involved in the preparation of the answer to my question from last October's estimates? c) Given the inaccuracies contained in the answer, what steps have the Department taken to that accurate responses are prepared in the first instance?	Written	19.04.11	23/06/11
8	1.4	Xenophon	Lost Platoon	Given that the Department has acknowledged the existence of the Second D and E Platoon, or so-called 'lost platoon', during the Vietnam War, can the department confirm that members of this platoon now have access to the same level of benefits available to other combat veterans?	Written	29.04.11	23/06/11
9	1.4	Xenophon	Lost Platoon	Will there be any further investigation into why records of this Platoon were lost? a) If so, what form will the investigation take? b) If not, why not? What conclusions have already been reached?	Written	29.04.11	23/06/11
10	1.4	Xenophon	Lost Platoon	Will there be further investigations into the activities of the platoon in Vietnam and the order they were issued? a) If so, what form will the investigations take? b) If not, why not? What conclusions have already been reached?	Written	29.04.11	23/06/11
11	1.4	Ronaldson	'Special Account' Expense	Under program 1.4 the Department indicates a 'special account' expense listed for approximately \$34 million each year over the forward estimates: a) What is the expense for? b) Why did it not appear in the budget papers in May?	Written	19.04.11	23/06/11
12	1.6	Ronaldson	Income Support Claims being Processed	During the Supplementary Budget Estimates in October last year about the number of income support claims being processed, the Secretary said in relation to a discussion about the number of income support processing claims: <i>'If this has caused some confusion for you and your colleagues, then I think we will in our additional estimates document look at putting some clarifying words in.'</i> 1. Can you tell me which page of the Estimates Statement the clarification appears on: 1(a). Given there is no clarification, can you explain the reasons why it is not there? 2. What work has gone on since our discussion in October last year to quantify and clarify these figures? 3. Can you guarantee that they will be addressed by the time of the Budget and the release of the Portfolio Budget Statement?	Written	19.04.11	23/06/11

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13	1.7	Ronaldson	Legislation – Younger War Widow's Claims	<p>Senator RONALDSON—Parliamentary Secretary, there seems to be some issues with Defence in relation to these sorts of matters. Would you, perhaps, take on notice these matters and can I ask, please, when you are taking them on notice, for an overview of Defence's processes in relation to these sorts of issues and whether there is a review underway in relation to those processes. I do not think there is anyone in this room that would not say that we just need to make sure this does not happen; we just cannot afford this sort of stuff. I mean, it is not right, and I am confident in what you are saying, Mr Campbell, that DVA is doing its bit.</p> <p>Mr Campbell—The other agencies are, I think, applying their legislation; so, in the end, we may have a real legislative problem—as in, the Commonwealth.</p> <p>Senator RONALDSON—Can you take that on notice, as well, Parliamentary Secretary. If there is an issue with legislation, I would be utterly amazed if between you and me we could not get this resolved very quickly with our respective parties and, I think, in fairness to the Independents and others, I would be utterly amazed if they were not also prepared to fast-track, to avoid this sort of situation, which I think is pretty intolerable, I have got to say.</p>	119	27.04.11	23/06/11
14	2.1	Faulkner	Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Treatment	<p>Senator FAULKNER—Thank you for that. In relation to the material that I forwarded—and I stress that I am in no position to make professional judgements about its efficacy in any way—has that been forwarded on, do you know?</p> <p>Mr Douglas—I do not know. I would have to take that on notice.</p> <p>Senator FAULKNER—You might let me know. I have formally forwarded this to the Minister for Defence, Science and Personnel and the Minister for Veterans' Affairs. Happily, I can do that in one letter because it is the same person—it saves a stamp. I will no doubt hear in the short order from Mr Snowdon what he suggests the next steps might be. I appreciate the information you have provided. That is helpful.</p>	97	19.04.11	23/06/11
15	2.5	Ronaldson	VVCS Collocation - Launceston	<p>Mr Campbell—We would have to look at the table. Launceston expires at the end of the month. Obviously we have run out of options there.</p> <p>Senator RONALDSON—I do not want to get bogged down on this. Are you going to sign a long-term lease or are you going to sign a short-term lease in relation to Launceston?</p> <p>Mr Campbell—I would have to take that on notice.</p>	100	19.04.11	23/06/11

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16	2.5	Ronaldson	VVCS Expenses	<p>1. In 2009-10 VVCS had actual expenses of \$19.766 million, down from a revised budget for 2009-10 in May last year of \$25.09 million.</p> <p>a) Is there an explanation for such a substantial decrease in the cost of the service for 2009-10?</p> <p>b) Was this not anticipated at Budget time last year?</p> <p>c) Is this trend likely to continue?</p> <p>2. If the trend is likely to continue, why has the 2010-11 revised budget increased the estimate from last May by \$300,000?</p> <p>a) Is it usual for these figures to jump around so significantly?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If yes, why? <p>b) If no, then why are they doing so now?</p>	Written	19.04.11	23/06/11
17	2.7	Ronaldson	Dunt Review	<p>Can the Department provide an update of the implementation of recommendations from the Dunt Review, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A breakdown of the implementation of recommendations from the Dunt Review; • An analysis and progress update of evaluation which was required by those recommendations; • Further work which is being undertaken in response to Prof. Dunt's recommendations; and • An analysis of those areas where Defence and DVA are working together on specific recommendations. <p>Does the Department have a protocol on the handling of clients with identified mental health needs? If such a protocol does exist, will the Department provide advice on the evaluation process, both in terms of staff training, and of the protocol itself.</p>	Written	19.04.11	23/06/11
18	2.7	Ronaldson	Client Files – Multiple-eligibility	<p>How does the Department manage client files where the client has eligibility under more than one Act?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For example: if a client has multi-eligibility, do they have more than one file? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If yes, why? • Is there a note on each file indicating that I am multi-eligibility? • If not, why not? 	Written	19.04.11	23/06/11

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19	3.1	Humphries	AWM – Centenary of Gallipoli - Additional Funding	<p>Senator HUMPHRIES—Is it possible that Senator Lundy was referring to some other sum of money which has been delivered to the memorial for the making of the First World War or the memorial of monument of some sort.</p> <p>Mr Campbell—This is the first I have heard of any comment by Senator Lundy. Your description appears to be slightly different to Senator Ronaldson's. I took Senator Ronaldson's to be a broad allocation of \$5 million for the centenary of ANZAC, but you appear to be saying that Senator Lundy—</p> <p>Senator HUMPHRIES—I am not saying it is anything. I am saying: is it possible that there is some other allocation that Senator Lundy was confusing this \$5 million that Senator Ronaldson was referring to with?</p> <p>Mr Campbell—I would have to have a look. This is the first I have heard of the statement, so I would have to have a look at it.</p> <p>Senator FEENEY—Let us take it on notice.</p>	113	19.04.11	23/06/11

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AWM 20	1	Ronaldson	AWM Additional Funding	<p>Following the announcement by the Prime Minister on 3 March 2011 of an additional \$8 million per year for the Australian War Memorial:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What will the breakdown of new funding be? • When will the money first appear in the Memorial's appropriation? • What will the funding be spent on? • Is the funding linked to the introduction of an entrance and/or parking fee at the Memorial? • Will the funding be 'operational' funding or form part of the Cultural Depreciation Allowance (equity funding)? • Will the 50 jobs forecast to be lost over the next five years be saved as a result of this additional funding? • What will the \$1.7 million 'to begin the redevelopment of the Memorial's First World War galleries' provide? • What does the Memorial plan to do with the World War One galleries through redevelopment? • When did the Prime Minister's office request access to the Australian War Memorial to make this announcement? • To whom was this request made and who approved the request? • Will the findings of the joint Department of Finance and Deregulation and the Department of Veterans' Affairs review be released publicly? • If not, why not? • When was the Review due to be completed? • When was the review completed? 	Written	27.04.11	23/06/11
21	1.2	Xenophon	AWM – Lost Platoon	Given that the Department has acknowledged the existence of the Second D and E Platoon, or so-called 'lost platoon', during the Vietnam War, what is the Australian War Memorial's position on the existence of the Platoon?	Written	29.04.11	23/06/11
22	1.2	Xenophon	AWM – Lost Platoon	What could be the implementations for veterans of this Platoon if the Australian War Memorial did not acknowledge the existence of the Platoon?	Written	29.04.11	23/06/11
23	1.2	Xenophon	AWM – Lost Platoon	<p>Will there be any further investigation into why records of this Platoon were lost?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If so, what form will the investigation take? • If not, why not? What conclusions have already been reached? 	Written	29.04.11	23/06/11

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24	1.2	Xenophon	AWM – Lost Platoon	Will there be further investigations into the activities of the platoon in Vietnam and the order they were issued? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If so, what form will the investigations take? 	Written	29.04.11	23/06/11