

Senate Finance and Public Administration Committee

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES 2008-09 (February 2009)

Index to Questions on Notice (QON)

Finance and Deregulation Portfolio

Note: the FPA Committee resolved that agencies provide answers to Questions on Notice by Thursday, 9 April 2009.

QON No.	Department / agency	Senator	Hansard Reference/Written	Question	Comments/date answer received
F1	DFD	COONAN	7-8	<p>Senator COONAN—I am not sure, but perhaps this might be a question for the minister: how is cabinet made aware of the use of consultants and how is cabinet able to judge the finance minister's promise to cut consultants being implemented?</p> <p>Mr Lewis—I think we would have to take that one on notice.</p>	4/5/09
F2	DFD	COONAN	9	<p>Senator COONAN—Documents that were released by the finance department under a freedom of information request indicate that \$100,000 was allocated to the ACCC to engage an external consultancy service to assist the ACCC to develop Fuelwatch branding, naming and logo designs. Is it common practice for agencies or departments to engage consultants to perform this type of work?</p> <p>Dr Grimes—I do not have direct personal knowledge of that. I would have to take a question like that on notice.</p> <p>Dr Watt—If you are asking whether it is common practice for agencies to do it, I think it would be difficult for us to speculate on the question because it is really a matter for agencies. You might be able</p>	29/4/09

				<p>to get that answer out of, for example, the ACCC when they are on later in the week. But it would be difficult for us to make a judgement about that sort of thing from our perspective. Clearly they have done it at least once.</p> <p>Senator COONAN—Certainly they consulted Finance, as they have to, in relation to a proposal—and I have it here—for consultancies that were in the order of \$1,764,325. I wanted to ask you about Finance’s assessment in relation to that proposal. Can somebody help me with Fuelwatch and GroceryWatch?</p> <p>Dr Grimes—We would probably have to get the officer involved with that, but we could get the officer involved and bring them up, maybe in the next 15 or 20 minutes or so.</p>	
F3	DFD	COONAN	10	<p>Mr Burton—In terms of the 2007-08 financial year, our expenditure on consultants was \$12.2 million.</p> <p>Senator COONAN—And what were those services for?</p> <p>Mr Burton—It is across a whole range of services. A lot of it is legal advice and the use of specialist accounting skills. There are some consultancies in relation to occupational health and safety. But I do not have a breakdown by the type of service provided.</p> <p>Senator COONAN—Could you get that for me?</p> <p>Mr Burton—Sure.</p>	9/4/09
F4	DFD	COONAN	10	<p>Senator COONAN—At what rate has the cost of employing grown?</p> <p>Dr Watt—I do not think that we would have an answer to that.</p> <p>Senator COONAN—Could you take that on notice.</p> <p>Dr Watt—We can take it on notice, but I do not think that we can get an answer for you. We simply do not have the data.</p>	24/4/09
F5	DFD	RONALDSON	15	<p>Senator RONALDSON—Can I ask you please to detail the across-department spend on media and communications services in 2007-08 to date. There are some other things I will put on notice. I think my colleague Senator Coonan has other matters. I will wait until she is finished.</p> <p><i>Senator Coonan</i>—</p> <p>Dr Watt—We will go and see where he is.</p> <p>Senator COONAN—Don’t worry, Senator Abetz can—</p> <p>Senator ABETZ—The chances are that person has retired, I would</p>	24/4/09

				<p>have thought. They would be no longer be required in the department!</p> <p>Senator RONALDSON—Or out shopping.</p> <p>Dr Watt—Sorry, does Senator Ronaldson want an answer to his question? Or have you put it on notice?</p> <p>Senator RONALDSON—I have put it on notice.</p> <p>Mr Lewis—Can I just clarify one thing, Senator: was that in relation to campaign advertising? Just so I am clear about the scope.</p> <p>Senator RONALDSON—No, it is the across-the-department media and communications external spend.</p> <p>Mr Lewis—External spend, okay—from AusTender.</p> <p>Dr Watt—We can give you the AusTender numbers. We cannot give you any more than that, Senator.</p>	
F6	DFD	ABETZ	23	<p>Senator ABETZ—Have you been asked by the Prime Minister to take the sorts of principles that were enunciated in that article into account when preparing policies and when looking at the issue of regulation? Has there been a government directive from Prime Minister and Cabinet that this neo-liberal view of the world of deregulation has to stop and we are now going to turn back to regulation?</p> <p>Senator Sherry—I do not believe that that is appropriate. We will take it on notice.</p>	9/4/09
F7	DFD	ABETZ	24	<p>Senator ABETZ—Are you at liberty to provide to us, on notice, a list of those ministries that have already undertaken their inefficiency review, if I can call it that?</p> <p>Ms Page—We have not asked for an inefficiency review. We have done a stocktake of redundant regulation, which will come forward probably during the winter session as a bill.</p> <p>Senator ABETZ—But you did indicate that some ministers were working on identifying inefficient regulations. I do not want to verbal you, but I understood you to say that. If that is the case, you can take that on notice.</p> <p>Senator Sherry—We will take that on notice.</p>	9/4/09
F8	DFD	ABETZ	26	<p>Senator ABETZ—How often does Finance undertake an exercise in determining whether a branding is going to be value for money? I would have thought it would be a pretty rare exercise for the</p>	14/4/09

				<p>department. Would it be done once a year?</p> <p>Dr Grimes—I am not sure we can give you a completely accurate figure here. We would probably have to take that on notice to give you even a broad sense. I could not give you an accurate figure right now of how many times a year on average we would do such an exercise.</p> <p>Senator ABETZ—We were struggling to think of one other than Fuelwatch. We had to go back a couple of years to think of APEC.</p> <p>Senator CAMERON—Or Work Choices?</p> <p>Senator ABETZ—No, that was not a branding or a logo that, as I understand it, went through this process.</p> <p>Senator Sherry—We are happy to take on notice your question, Senator Abetz. We will go back through. I can think of a few other examples besides Work Choices, but we will go back through.</p>	
F9	DFD	COONAN	27	<p>Senator COONAN—Could you please take on notice for me—because I know I am probably testing your recollection, Mr Painton—the right figure for GROCERYchoice. And to pick up on Dr Watt’s assurance that the ACCC will be returning the moneys, by that I mean all the moneys.</p> <p>Mr Painton—Sorry, Minister, I might have confused you. When I quoted the \$250,000 figure, I think that was in relation to Fuelwatch. I do not have a figure for GROCERYchoice, but we can check on that as well.</p>	24/4/09
F10	DFD	ABETZ	27	<p>Senator ABETZ—Wait a minute, can I clarify this. I thought it was \$100,000. You are now saying it was \$250,000.</p> <p>Mr Painton—I think the distinction here is that with the \$100,000 figure you are probably talking about what was actually spent, but a figure of \$250,000—</p> <p>Senator ABETZ—Was allocated?</p> <p>Mr Painton—may have been quoted in the costing documentation at one stage.</p> <p>Senator COONAN—It certainly was at one stage, because I have a document here—</p> <p>Senator ABETZ—Could you clarify that for us on notice.</p> <p>Mr Painton—I will try and clarify what the final figure in the costing is, but I imagine that the figure you have is what was actually spent.</p>	14/4/09

F11	DFD	COONAN	28	<p>Senator COONAN—We will be very interested to know what is going to be returned to the budget following Finance having quite properly questioned what seemed to be an inordinately high bid for a branding exercise.</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Senator COONAN—Thank you very much, and could Dr Watt please take on notice also how much exactly will be returned.</p>	14/4/09
F12	DFD	COONAN	28	<p>Senator COONAN—Can you take on notice then how much was included in the costing for consultants for GroceryChoice, please?</p>	24/4/09
F13	DFD	COONAN	28	<p>Senator COONAN—And can you confirm how much money will be paid to Choice to run the GroceryChoice website?</p> <p>Mr Painton—I am not sure whether that was part of the original proposal at the time. I think perhaps it was not, so it may not be part of the costing. But we can confirm what information we have on that.</p>	14/4/09
F14	DFD	COONAN	29	<p>Senator COONAN—Thank you. I should rephrase that question so it is perfectly clear. What scrutiny is given to this payment by the department? And could I please be advised which department or agency will make the payment to Choice?</p>	14/4/09
F15	DFD	COONAN	29	<p>Mr Painton—The funding for grocery watch has been transferred to Treasury. But we will be able to confirm that.</p> <p>Senator COONAN—Would you mind taking that on notice. I will also ask the ACCC.</p>	14/4/09
F16	DFD	ABETZ	29	<p>Senator ABETZ—Thank you for that. These questions are relevant, then. What rules does the government have in place regarding the operation of the budget? For example, is every minister required to bring forward offsets or cost savings for every new policy proposal that they bring forward?</p> <p>Dr Watt—The rule has not changed for a very long period of time. Ministers are required to bring forward offsetting savings unless there is a specific decision taken not to.</p> <p>Senator ABETZ—I thought that was the practice in the past. Given the current circumstances, will the rule be now waived, given the need to stimulate the economy, or will the rule be more strongly enforced,</p>	29/4/09

				<p>given the large budget deficit that we are facing over forward estimates? That may well be a policy issue, which should go to the policy.</p> <p>Dr Watt—That one should go to the minister.</p> <p>Senator Sherry—I was not personally involved in the development of the stimulus package, but the economic and financial times require that stimulus. It has been well discussed.</p> <p>Senator ABETZ—I am not asking about the stimulus package. I am asking about the upcoming budget, given the circumstances that we find ourselves in. Do you want to take that on notice?</p> <p>Senator Sherry—I would have to take that on notice, Senator Abetz.</p>	
F17	DFD	ABETZ	30	<p>Senator ABETZ—Can you inform us of how much depreciation funding is available for each government department and agency for the replacement of assets? I assume that would not be in a back-pocket brief and you would need to take that on notice.</p> <p>Dr Watt—We would have to take that on notice. We also probably have to say to you that that is the sort of information we do not hold centrally; we would have to talk to individual agencies. If you want that information, we would probably try to do it on a selective basis with only the material agencies to cut down the workload for them and us, because the material agencies, the top 20, are 99 per cent of the budget, or something like that.</p>	29/4/09
F18	DFD	ABETZ	31	<p>Senator ABETZ—Thank you very much of that. In the UEFO, Dr Watt, you were the winner of an extra \$20.5 million, I understand, to strengthen the capacity of central agencies to support the government's strategic policy agenda. Is that correct?</p> <p>Dr Watt—I am sure it is correct, Senator.</p> <p>Senator ABETZ—All right. Are you wanting to share with us briefly, please, how this money will be allocated within Finance; which areas in Finance will receive the extra money; will it mean extra staff; in which categories, et cetera? Would you like to take that on notice and disaggregate that figure for us?</p> <p>Dr Watt—I will have to take some of that on notice.</p>	29/4/09
F19	DFD	ABETZ	32	<p>Senator ABETZ—I dare say we will never know the full amount of the disaggregation. Unfortunately, my time period is slipping by, so</p>	4/5/09

				can I just ask on notice whether there was any benchmarking between the cost estimates of the Fuelwatch logo and the GROCERYchoice— Dr Watt —I do not have an answer. We will see if we can get one for you.	
F20	DFD	RONALDSON	36, 37	Senator RONALDSON —I think I need to take it around to him personally to make absolutely sure that he gets it, after what happened over the last 24 hours. Can I ask you, please, about these advertising costs? Can you give the committee a breakdown of the costs in terms of media buy as in radio placements, newspaper and magazine placements, internet advertising and mail-outs? Mr Lewis —We would need to take that on notice and provide the breakdown. We could provide you with the aggregate but the breakdown by media type we would need to take on notice. ... Senator RONALDSON —And you will have details of what their costs are in relation to the placements? Mr Lewis —We can provide details of that spread of media.	9/4/09
F21	DFD	RONALDSON	38	Senator RONALDSON —In relation to the government advertising campaigns on a whole-of-government approach, when did you actually take responsibility for both the campaign and the non-campaign contracts under the new agreement you mentioned earlier? Mr Lewis —I would need to consult the records for the exact date.	9/4/09
F22	DFD	RONALDSON	38	Senator RONALDSON —Are you able to advise me how many communication campaigns were conducted by the government in the calendar year 2008 or do you need to take that on notice? Mr Lewis —We would need to take that on notice, but we certainly have that information. Senator RONALDSON —For each of these campaigns can you indicate the name of the campaign, which department had responsibility for it, the total cost of the campaigns, which agencies were short-listed and which were finally selected for advertising-creative— Mr Lewis —There you are going to the procurement decision, as I explained before. We are certainly able to help you with the previous matters. On the procurement method, you would have to go to the agency that had responsibility for the particular campaign. But we will	9/4/09

				be able to advise you on agency responsibilities for each campaign.	
F23	DFD	RONALDSON	38-39	<p>Senator RONALDSON—In relation to my question about which agencies were short-listed and which were finally selected for, one, advertising-creative, two, public relations and, three, market research, is that an agency responsibility?</p> <p>Mr Lewis—Yes.</p> <p>Senator RONALDSON—Are you able to indicate the relevant ministers or ministers' personal staff taking part in the decisions to select the successful agency or agencies?</p> <p>....</p> <p>Senator Sherry—It is a direct question for a minister, because the personal staff are responsible to the minister. I am happy to take it on notice.</p>	9/4/09
F24	DFD	RONALDSON	39	<p>Senator RONALDSON—Can you give me an itemised breakdown of each campaign in terms of creative agency cost; TV placement cost; print placement cost; radio placement cost; mail-outs, brochures and booklet costs, internet costs; public relations agency costs, including additional costs from the activities undertaken by those agencies or their agents; and, finally, market research agency costs?</p> <p>Mr Grant—We cannot give you costs on market research, public relations and creative. Whether we can give you mail-out costs is a question as well. What we can give you is the media buy—that is, print media, radio, TV, online et cetera.</p>	9/4/09
F25	DFD	RONALDSON	39	<p>Senator RONALDSON—Are you able to give me information on the start and end dates of the airing of the electronic advertising component of each campaign?</p> <p>Mr Grant—Yes, we can do that.</p>	9/4/09
F26	Medibank Private	CORMANN	42	<p>Senator CORMANN—So you complied with the submission date, but perhaps you could give us, on notice, the date when the Medibank Private board signed off on it.</p> <p>Mr Saavides—I would be happy to.</p> <p>Senator CORMANN—Also the date that you did submit your rate change application to the minister.</p>	9/4/09

				Mr Saavides —Yes.	
F27	Medibank Private	CORMANN	48	<p>Senator CORMANN—In the lead-up to the 2004 federal election, you did not release a report into the effectiveness of the private health insurance rebate that was commissioned by Medibank Private?</p> <p>Mr Savvides—I am not aware of that. I will take that on notice and inquire.</p> <p>Senator CORMANN—The Harper report: wasn't that something that was commissioned by Medibank Private? Do you remember the Harper report?</p> <p>Mr Savvides—Yes. The Harper report was a report that endeavoured to explain to the reader the value of the rebate in the total health system, which is a mixed healthcare system. Its principle proposition was that everyone was better off as a result of the incentive, because it took pressure off the public system as well. He was trying to make the case about the mixed health care system as a whole.</p> <p>Senator CORMANN—That was at the time a view that was being promoted and which Medibank Private supported. Have you changed your view on that?</p> <p>Mr Savvides—No. You remind me that Professor Harper did some presentations across the country to various audiences about the findings. But the principle theme of it was the value of the rebate in the system. I think that there were some sensitivity analyses done within the report about what would happen if you varied the percentage et cetera. You are taking me back in time. I would have to take your question on notice to give you a more detailed response.</p>	9/4/09
F28	Medibank Private	CORMANN	49	<p>Senator CORMANN—How many staff will be made redundant or be redeployed as a result of the acquisition?</p> <p>Mr Savvides—Overall, our commitment to our people in Wollongong is that we are going to grow the employment base. We have made a few redundancies just recently in the management ranks. I will take it on notice but it was probably eight or nine—maybe a few more—but that is really just to reset the management leadership team. The rest of the future of the organisation is to start to grow its health management contribution to the Medibank membership.</p>	9/4/09
F29	Medibank Private	MOORE	51	Senator MOORE —Mr Savvides, I want to ask you about the issue of	9/4/09

				<p>reducing payroll deductions. Both Senator Forshaw and I have just been told that we cannot have payroll deduction any longer for our Medibank Private contributions. What is the cut-off in your process to determine what is economically viable and what is not?</p> <p>Mr Savvides—It is all new to me. I am going to have to take that on notice and investigate it.</p>	
F30	Medibank Private	MOORE	51-52	<p>Senator MOORE—I do try to get to the right place. Mr Saavides, I just want to know about the economic determinant. This is the second time it has happened to me. In a previous employment the same thing occurred, so I am balancing that up and putting it on notice. The other issue was that I had heard a lot about your complaint line, because we have asked those questions in the past. I ensured that my concern was issued as a complaint when I called them up, so I would like to find out, and I will put this on notice, whether there were many complaints about this issue and about the alternatives—not just generally with this; it is possibly a number of payroll decisions that are being made about whether that is a viable thing for the business. The other minor issue was that I received the letter about the decision being made after the decision had been taken, which is an administrative issue. I will hand over to Senator Forshaw.</p> <p>Senator Sherry—We will take the questions on notice.</p>	9/4/09
F31	Medibank Private	FORSHAW	52	<p>Senator FORSHAW—Following on from that, can I ask—you may be able to answer this now and if you cannot you can include it in the answer to Senator Moore’s question—is there a minimum number of contributors that you need in a workplace to have an arrangement for payroll deductions?</p> <p>Mr Savvides—Yes, there is. That has also to link the pricing as well, so we are able to offer some—</p> <p>Senator FORSHAW—What is the minimum number?</p> <p>Mr Savvides—I will take that on notice, but there is a hierarchical structure and also links with the pricing that we offer in terms of discounting, within the constraints of discounting that we are available to us.</p>	9/4/09
F32	DFD	PARRY	61	<p>Senator PARRY—Any way you wish to present that. If you could give me a breakdown for electorate offices, the services provided and the number of staff involved with that, that would be fine.</p>	9/4/09

				<p>....</p> <p>Senator PARRY—I am specifically referring to staff members from Ministerial and Parliamentary Services who service senators and members.</p> <p>Ms Clarke—That would be departmental staff.</p> <p>Senator PARRY—Yes.</p> <p>Senator Faulkner—That is staff members in Ministerial and Parliamentary Services and the Department of Finance and Deregulation who have a direct association with the provision of services to members and senators—is that correct?</p> <p>Senator PARRY—Correct.</p> <p>Ms Mason—Senator, we will try and get that for you quickly, but we may need to take it on notice. We will see how we go.</p>	
F33	DFD	COLLINS	72-73	<p>Ms Clarke—I have it here that the arrangements were discussed with the Department of the House of Reps on 20 June 2007 and advice provided in July 2007.</p> <p>Senator JACINTA COLLINS—Why was it discussed with the House of Representatives? Was there a particular incident? Why was the security advice sought?</p> <p>Ms Clarke—I would have to take that on notice. I do not have that information here.</p> <p>...</p> <p>Ms Mason—Sorry, I am not frowning; I am just concentrating on your question. I am also trying to recall the circumstances, which are now a couple of years ago. My recollection is that we do periodically ask for reviews of security issues associated with buildings where we have staff or where we have responsibility. I do not recall there having been any particular trigger to ask for a security review of Commonwealth parliament offices in the various states, but we did have a review. We did have a report. The report made certain recommendations to us, which we have implemented. That is my recollection of the circumstances surrounding the 2007 reporting policy.</p> <p>Dr Watt—We can take that on notice and provide you with more information.</p>	9/4/09
F34	DFD	CAMERON	76	<p>Senator CAMERON—Could you provide the analysis as to why the department would go to a fully casualised workforce. I just do not</p>	9/4/09

				<p>know of it happening anywhere else. Can you give me the managerial analysis that determined that this was the way to go?</p> <p>...</p> <p>Senator Faulkner—Let's not guess. I do not want to provide any guesstimates. I think the way to deal with your question is to provide you with the background in relation to the timing and the nature of the decision— how it was made and so forth—which we can certainly do. There may or may not be a capacity to also provide you with information about any analysis that occurred in management at the time. I am not sure about that element, but what I am sure we can do is at least provide you with that general level of background and look at the analysis issue.</p>	
F35	DFD	COLLINS	76	<p>Senator JACINTA COLLINS—Just before you go back to Senator Ferguson, I have a quick question based on my recent experience. For the first time since 1995, when I was recently in Adelaide, I was asked if I was happy to share a car. I am curious about the extent to which that occurs. On that occasion I was quite happy to share a car with the other senator, but it is the first time I have ever had Comcar ask if I was prepared to share a car. I am curious about the degree to which that behaviour now occurs.</p> <p>Mr Sweeney—I am unaware of that instance, but I can certainly find out the background and let you know.</p> <p>Senator JACINTA COLLINS—The frequency of that is what I am interested in.</p>	9/4/09
F36	DFD	FERGUSON	76	<p>Senator FERGUSON—There is one other issue that I wanted to raise. Some time ago a previous government took away the entitlement of ex-members and senators to use Comcars to get from their homes to the airport. Do you have any idea of the savings that have been made by that ruling?</p> <p>Ms Mason—Not with us. We would need to take that question on notice, I am afraid.</p>	9/4/09
F37	DFD	RONALDSON	79	<p>Senator RONALDSON—No. I asked you whether there are any principal advisers who are paid above the range.</p> <p>...</p> <p>Senator Faulkner—We will need to check.</p> <p>Senator RONALDSON—I know the answer: yes.</p>	9/4/09

				Senator Faulkner —The answer to your question is that certainly some will be, but we will need to check how many, if you wish to know precisely. We do not have that information. But I stress to you again that all those staff—all of them—hold senior staff positions.	
F38	DFD	RONALDSON	85	Senator RONALDSON — ...Can you provide the committee with the aggregated quantum of money that makes up the difference between what the staff are actually paid and the top of their respective salary bands? You can take that on notice.	9/4/09
F39	DFD	RONALDSON	85	Senator RONALDSON —Could you also provide the committee with an estimate of the salaries of these people, not including the MSA.	9/4/09
F40	DFD	RONALDSON	85, 87	Senator RONALDSON —Thank you. I will try and put most of this on notice. In relation to the second mobile phone for ministers and parliamentary secretaries, are what are called the ‘home department’ mobile phones still available or have they been taken out? Senator Faulkner —I am not sure it is an entitlement that is accessed consistently across departments. Dr Watt —We are not aware of the practice in Finance. We will have to take that on notice. ... Senator JACINTA COLLINS —I was wondering earlier whether the questions about the two mobile phones related to the fact that some years ago departments provided ministers with PDAs, whereas they were not available through MAPS. Dr Watt —I am less sure of that. I think there might have been occasions when there was some confusion about entitlements and two phones were provided. I do not know. We will look into it, as we said.	9/4/09
F41	DFD	RONALDSON	86	Senator RONALDSON —I am not asking for the nature of the advice. I am just asking whether advice has been provided; whether you have given any assistance to the government in relation to the establishment of an auditor of parliamentary allowances. Ms Mason —Yes. Senator RONALDSON —Thank you. When was that? Ms Mason —I would have to take that on notice.	9/4/09

F42	DFD	RONALDSON	86	<p>Senator RONALDSON—When was the last time you were asked for assistance?</p> <p>Ms Mason—I think we are getting into the difficult territory of—</p> <p>Senator RONALDSON—I might be difficult for you, Ms Mason, but I do not think the question itself is terribly difficult.</p> <p>Ms Mason—the department’s advice to government.</p> <p>Dr Watt—We will take it on notice and see if we can help you.</p>	9/4/09
F43	DFD	RONALDSON	86	<p>Senator RONALDSON—I thought it was interesting that between 2007 and October 2008 the relocations were only \$25,000, which seemed a remarkably small figure for the relocation of 65 staff and their families. I assume that that was the correct figure. I appreciate you might need to take this on notice, but did that include all travel expenses, including air fares and car travel? Did it include the cost of furniture and belongings removal? Did it include the allowance for temporary accommodation? Could you please provide the committee with a breakdown of those relocation costs, itemised by travel expenses, furniture and belongings removal and allowance for temporary accommodation.</p>	9/4/09
F44	DFD	RONALDSON	86	<p>Senator RONALDSON— ... Could you also please provide the number and classification of full-time ongoing government personal staff that commenced employment before January 2008 but have since ceased employment and, in relation to these full-time ongoing government personal staff that commenced employment before January 2008 but have since ceased employment, what are the associated costs from the turnover, including the relocation costs, advertising of positions vacant, relocation costs for replacement staff, including travel and temporary accommodation, and, where applicable, the provision of training and security clearances for replacement staff.</p>	9/4/09
F45	DFD	POLLEY	88	<p>CHAIR—Have you done any analysis in relation to the costs and the budget for the calls, because I think one of the main issues when they were first introduced was the amount of PDAs that were dropping out and in some cases having to return the call three times. Have you done an analysis on whether there has been an increased cost to members’ and senators’ mobile phone usage over the last two years?</p> <p>Mr Quester—We have not done an analysis on the actual mobile call</p>	9/4/09

				costs. I would have to seek some guidance from my colleagues in Ministerial and Parliamentary Services. CHAIR —Can you take that on notice.	
F46	DFD	POLLEY	88	CHAIR —How many people are participating with this pilot program? Mr Quester —I do not have that information with me. It has been expanded since it originally went into service. We did cater for that, knowing that there would be some requests for additional people to come onto the pilot. But I could have that information brought up to me.	9/4/09
F47	DFD	POLLEY	89	CHAIR —During the pilot programs that were run for the other models that were initially introduced, can you tell me the number of complaints that were made during that period of time, as opposed to what has been reported thus far in this trial? Mr Quester —From the original MPDA trial? CHAIR —Yes. Mr Quester —I would have to take that on notice.	9/4/09
F48	DFD	POLLEY	90	CHAIR —The department of finance picks up the telephone account, but my understanding is that there is no entitlement to caller ID. I wanted to have that confirmed because I would have thought, from a security point of view, it would be an advantage. Ms Mason —We will have to take that on notice and check it for you.	9/4/09
F49	DFD	FIELDING	90	Senator FIELDING —They are nearly obsolete after a year, when you think about the amount of development that is going into them. I am not interested in spending more of taxpayers' money, but if a senator or a member finds the tool extremely valuable and useful, could they buy the latest machine out of their own money and allow you to run the software on top? You may want to take that on notice. It is one point that I think is pretty important. I do not want to waste taxpayers' money. By the same token, they would not want me to be inefficient in what I am doing either. Does that make sense? Mr Quester —We will take that on notice, yes.	9/4/09
F50	DFD	FIELDING	91	Senator FIELDING —Could you write to Apple and ask them to formally respond to your concerns? I am not sure. I am hearing two	9/4/09

				<p>stories. I am not going to say that I am an expert. Yes, I am an electronic engineer, but I am not professing to be an expert. I would not mind if you could take on notice whether you could write to them specifically with your concerns and get them to respond. That way we can stop the argy-bargy backwards and forwards: 'They said; she said; I said.' Would that make sense?</p> <p>Mr Quester—I do not know if we could actually write to Apple and try to influence the way they are approaching the market. I think we could approach through the Presiding Officers Information Technology Advisory Group. We could get a representative to give an explanation and presentation to that group on iPhone's capabilities and what the future direction of iPhone is.</p> <p>Senator FIELDING—Could you let me know the outcome of that?</p> <p>Mr Quester—Yes.</p> <p>Senator FIELDING—Thank you.</p> <p>CHAIR—Can I clarify that that will come back to the committee</p>	
F51	AEC	ABETZ	95	<p>Senator ABETZ—But possibly, if you could, from day one when you started, tell us in each financial year the amount of revenue that that meant for the Australian Electoral Commission from the trade union movement.</p> <p>Mr Dacey—The 20 per cent figure?</p> <p>Senator ABETZ—Yes, what that 20 per cent figure was in actual dollar terms per financial year so that we can get a handle on that. ...</p>	3/3/09
F52	AEC	ABETZ	95	<p>Senator ABETZ—...Mr Pirani, you have had discussions with the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations in relation to this policy change. That is because the government, to your knowledge, has made the decision that that will come into being?</p> <p>Mr Pirani—I would need to confirm that with DEWR.</p> <p>Senator ABETZ—Minister, are you able to assist us? I understand it is a government decision. I have certain views about that, but they are not to be canvassed here.</p> <p>Senator Faulkner—Senator, I am actually not able to assist you.</p> <p>Senator ABETZ—Fine.</p> <p>Senator Faulkner—But if you wish, I could take it on notice for you. It would be another minister's decision.</p>	9/4/09
F53	AEC	ABETZ	95	<p>Senator ABETZ—Yes, of course. I would anticipate that to be the</p>	9/4/09

				<p>case. Mr Dacey, with your wealth of experience, are you able to indicate to us, just in rough terms, what the cost would be to conduct one of these protected ballots? Sure, I know, every one is different— Mr Dacey—They are, Senator. Senator ABETZ—but what is a rough figure? Mr Dacey—It may be pretty unfair. A lot of these ballots are very small. Some of them could have under 10 or 20 voters in the ballot. I would rather take it on notice than mislead you at all as to the cost, but we could get that figure in a very short time.</p>	
F54	FFMA	PARRY	107	<p>Senator PARRY—All right, I will accept that, Minister. I will place my final question on notice, if there is anything to provide on notice. If there are any accountability measures, that gives us comfort that the board is accountable to some degree for correct investment strategy especially now that we have the non-escrow shares in Telstra which can be sold on the market and funds invested in any other strategy or other form. So I am sure that the committee would appreciate any information on accountability measures you wish to provide, and I am happy to take it on notice.</p>	9/4/09
F55	DFD	BRANDIS	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F56	DFD	BRANDIS	Written	See Attached Sheet	24/4/09
F57	DFD	BRANDIS	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F58a	DFD	BROWN	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F58b	DFD	BROWN	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F58c	DFD	BROWN	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F59a	Whole Portfolio	COONAN	Written	See Attached Sheet	29/4/09
F59b	Whole Portfolio	COONAN	Written	See Attached Sheet	29/4/09
F60a	Whole Portfolio	COONAN	Written	See Attached Sheet	29/4/09
F60b	Whole Portfolio	COONAN	Written	See Attached Sheet	29/4/09
F61	Whole Portfolio	COONAN	Written	See Attached Sheet	29/4/09
F62	DFD	COONAN	Written	See Attached Sheet	14/4/09
F63	DFD	COONAN	Written	See Attached Sheet	14/4/09
F64	DFD	COONAN	Written	See Attached Sheet	14/4/09
F65	DFD	COONAN	Written	See Attached Sheet	14/4/09
F66	DFD	COONAN	Written	See Attached Sheet	14/4/09

F67	DFD	COONAN	Written	See Attached Sheet	14/4/09
F68	Whole Portfolio	HUMPHRIES	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F69a	DFD	PAYNE	Written	See Attached Sheet	Tfr to Treasury
F69b	DFD	PAYNE	Written	See Attached Sheet	Tfr to Treasury
F69c	DFD	PAYNE	Written	See Attached Sheet	Tfr to Treasury
F69d	DFD	PAYNE	Written	See Attached Sheet	Tfr to Treasury
F69e	DFD	PAYNE	Written	See Attached Sheet	Tfr to Treasury
F69f	DFD	PAYNE	Written	See Attached Sheet	Tfr to Treasury
F69g	DFD	PAYNE	Written	See Attached Sheet	Tfr to Treasury
F70a	DFD	RYAN	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F70b	DFD	RYAN	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F70c	DFD	RYAN	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F70d	DFD	RYAN	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F70e	DFD	RYAN	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F71a	AEC	RYAN	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F71b	AEC	RYAN	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F71c	AEC	RYAN	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F71d	AEC	RYAN	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F71e	AEC	RYAN	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F71f	AEC	RYAN	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F72a	DFD	RONALDSON	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F72b	DFD	RONALDSON	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F72c	DFD	RONALDSON	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F72d	DFD	RONALDSON	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F72e	DFD	RONALDSON	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F72f	DFD	RONALDSON	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F72g	DFD	RONALDSON	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F73a	DFD	RONALDSON	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F73b	DFD	RONALDSON	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F74a	DFD	RONALDSON	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F74b	DFD	RONALDSON	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F74c	DFD	RONALDSON	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F74d	DFD	RONALDSON	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09

F74e	DFD	RONALDSON	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F75a	AEC	RONALDSON	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F75b	AEC	RONALDSON	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F75c	AEC	RONALDSON	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F75d	AEC	RONALDSON	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F75e	AEC	RONALDSON	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F76	AEC	SIEWERT	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F77a	DFD	BOYCE	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F77b	DFD	BOYCE	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F77c	DFD	BOYCE	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F77d	DFD	BOYCE	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F77e	DFD	BOYCE	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F78a	AEC	BOYCE	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F78b	AEC	BOYCE	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F78c	AEC	BOYCE	Written	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F79a	DFD	JOHNSTON	Tfr. from DEWHA	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F79b	DFD	JOHNSTON	Tfr. from DEWHA	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F79c	DFD	JOHNSTON	Tfr. from DEWHA	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F79d	DFD	JOHNSTON	Tfr. from DEWHA	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F79e	DFD	JOHNSTON	Tfr. from DEWHA	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F79f	DFD	JOHNSTON	Tfr. from DEWHA	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F79g	DFD	JOHNSTON	Tfr. from DEWHA	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F79h	DFD	JOHNSTON	Tfr. from DEWHA	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F79i	DFD	JOHNSTON	Tfr. from DEWHA	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F80	DFD	POLLEY	Tfr. From DPS	CHAIR —I have some questions in relation to PDAs. I was wondering if you could update us as to what PDAs are now in service to senators and members, and how many PDAs have been returned and senators and members going back to using a mobile phone? Mr Kenny —I will have to take that second part on notice, Senator, in terms of the statistics.	Answered at hearing (F&PA 24 Feb p. 87-88)
F81a	DFD	BIRMINGHAM	Tfr. from DEWHA	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F81b	DFD	BIRMINGHAM	Tfr. from DEWHA	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F81c	DFD	BIRMINGHAM	Tfr. from DEWHA	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F81d	DFD	BIRMINGHAM	Tfr. from DEWHA	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09

F81e	DFD	BIRMINGHAM	Tfr. from DEWHA	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F81f	DFD	BIRMINGHAM	Tfr. from DEWHA	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F82a	DFD	PAYNE	Tfr. from Defence	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F82b	DFD	PAYNE	Tfr. from Defence	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09
F82c	DFD	PAYNE	Tfr. from Defence	See Attached Sheet	9/4/09

Written QON

F55 (BRANDIS)-DFD

In response to 2008 Supplementary Estimates question 102 (Hansard CA22 24_10) could the Office of Evaluation and Audit through the Department provide a copy of the September 2008 audit of Centrecorp Aboriginal Investment Corporation Pty Ltd.

F56 (BRANDIS)-DFD

Could the department also provide a copy of the Audit report on the Northern Territory Land Councils by OEA of January 2008 as mentioned in point 3 of the answer to a question on notice (Hansard CA22 24_10).

F57 (BRANDIS)-DFD

Can the Department provide the committee with the ANAO reports and audits from 2006 that examines the relationship between the Central Land Council and Centrecorp as mentioned in point 4 of the answer to a question on notice (Hansard CA22 24_10).

F58(a-c) (BROWN)-DFD

The Future Fund announced in early 2008 that it will be considering environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors in its future investment decisions. In February this year, the Future Fund announced that it will recruit a manager of responsible investment to oversee the Fund's management of ESG factors. In light of these encouraging developments, can the Future Fund please advise:

- a) What role do ESG factors play in the Future Fund's investment decisions?
- b) Will the Future Fund be signing up to the United Nations Principles for Responsible Investment, as have hundreds of leading investment organisations including many major Australian industry and retail super funds? If not, why not?
- c) Are there any other existing frameworks that the Future Fund will use to guide its consideration of ESG factors?

F59(a-b) (COONAN)-FINANCE PORTFOLIO

- a) How much did each department and agency spend in 2007-08 on:
 - a. Consultants in total
 - b. ITC Consultants
 - c. Legal Consultants
 - d. HR Consultants
 - e. Accounting Consultants
- b) What was the average cost per hour for each department of the above A-E?

F60(a-b) (COONAN)-FINANCE PORTFOLIO

- a) How much is it estimated that each department and agency will spend in 2008-09 on:
 - a. Consultants in total
 - b. ITC Consultants
 - c. Legal Consultants
 - d. HR Consultants
 - e. Accounting Consultants
- b) What is the average cost per hour for each department and agency of the above A-E?

F61 (COONAN)-FINANCE PORTFOLIO

Over each year of the forward estimates, how much will each department and agency spend on:
A) Consultants in total

- B) ITC Consultants
- C) Legal Consultants
- D) HR Consultants
- E) Accounting Consultants

F62 (COONAN)-DFD

Given the Outcome 1 for Finance is ‘sustainable government finances’, can you please provide a breakdown of what the \$200 billion debt that the Government has available will be spent on?

F63 (COONAN)-DFD

Given that Outcome 1 for Finance is ‘sustainable government finances’, can you please explain why the Budget will be in deficit of \$60 billion in the last two years of the current estimates period when the UEFO document projects GDP growth of 3 per cent?

F64 (COONAN)-DFD

Given that Outcome 1 for Finance is ‘sustainable government finances’, how is the Department of Finance consulted when the Government proposes to increase Australia’s debt levels?

F65 (COONAN)-DFD

Does Finance cost interest expenditure? When Cabinet considers measures from now on, given that the Budget is in deficit, will each costing include the interest component that will be used to borrow the money? If not, why not? How will Cabinet know the true cost of the policy if this is not included?

F66 (COONAN)-DFD

What is the total level of Government expenditure in 2008-09 currently estimated to be?

F67 (COONAN)-DFD

What is the projected total level of Government expenditure to be in 2011-12? If the economy grows at above trend in 2011-12, and the Government’s commitment to grow spending at no more than 2 per cent is activated, what will the maximum level of Government spending be in 2012-13?

F68 (HUMPHRIES)-FINANCE PORTFOLIO

How many SES positions were there in this department as at:

- 24 November 2007
- 26 February 2009

F69(a-g) (PAYNE)-DFD

- a) Have there been any discussions with Australian home mortgage providers regarding possible transfer of control from their private ownership to the Australian Government?
- b) Have any discussions arisen with Australian home mortgage providers regarding their liquidity as a consequence of the action by the United States Administration in September 2008 to place Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac under government control, with government-appointed chief executives?
- c) Does the department have concern over the liquidity during the next 12 months of any Australian home mortgage provider? If so, can the department name those providers?
- d) Is the department in dialogue with the Department of the Treasury and/or Department of Finance and Deregulation to monitor the liquidity of home mortgage providers in Australia?
- e) Is there any evidence available to the department that finance for home lending in Australia has tightened?
- f) Is the Department aware of any trend towards lending a lesser proportion of the total value of the property to be mortgaged? That is, are financiers now lending say 80 or 85% of the

property valuation where a year ago they might have lent 100% of the purchase price, or even 100% plus conveyancing costs? If such as trend towards more restricted lending practices is evident, why is it occurring?

- g) Has the department, perhaps in conjunction with Treasury and/or Finance departments, questioned mortgage providers when they have failed to pass on the full benefit of Reserve Bank cuts in cash rates to those Australians who have variable rate home loans? If so, what were the responses to the Government from those lenders?

F70(a-e) (RYAN)-DFD

- a) Since November 2007, how many Blackberry/Personal Digital Assistants have been destroyed rather than re-deployed for use by Ministers and their staff across the Government?

If so:

- b) Why were they destroyed rather than redeployed?
- c) What was the cost of replacing these?
- d) Who destroyed these?
- e) Did the internal or external party responsible for destroying these have a security clearance?

F71(a-f) (RYAN)-AEC

Can the AEC provide the following information:

- a) The total cost in the 2007-08 financial year of conducting regular (either annual or otherwise) internal officer and delegate elections for registered trade unions?
- b) An estimate of the total cost of these elections for the 2008-09 financial year.
- c) Estimates or forecasts of these costs over the budget estimates and forecast period.
- d) Estimates of what the AEC would charge an external party for such elections if it were contracted to do so on a commercial basis.
- e) What are the arrangements for funding such elections?
- f) Is cost recovery applied or are they funded by the Commonwealth?

F72(a-g) (RONALDSON)-DFD

- a) How many [Part 2 of the MoPS Act] Consultants are employed in ministerial offices and the offices of parliamentary secretaries?
- b) Are there any staff working in ministerial offices who are not employed under the MOP(S) Act or by a government department?
- c) If so, can you please provide the committee with the number of these staff and details of what agreement they are employed under?
- d) Can you provide the committee with a breakdown of the number and classification of full-time ongoing government personal staff that commenced employment in or after December 2007 but have since ceased employment?
- e) In relation to these full-time ongoing government personal staff that commenced employment in or after December 2007 but have since ceased employment, what are the associated costs from the turnover including any relocation costs, advertising of positions vacant, relocation costs for replacement staff including travel and temporary accommodation and, where applicable, for the provision of security clearances for replacement staff?
- f) Do any Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries currently have mobile phones provided by M&PS? If so, whom?
- g) Do any Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries currently have Telecards? If so, whom?

F73(a-b) (RONALDSON)-DFD

- a) Is the Department aware of any appropriation listed in Budget papers which specifically allows for the establishment of an Auditor of Parliamentary Entitlements or similar office? If so, where does this appear?
- b) What is the cost, to date, of any work done by Departmental officials or external consultants, including legal advice, in relation to the establishment of such an office?

F74(a-e) (RONALDSON)-DFD

- a) What is the purpose of the travel undertaken by the staff of the CCSTU? Can you provide us with some examples of the duties they perform that necessitate travel?
- b) Can you provide the committee, with a list of home bases of each of the CCSTU members?
- c) Is the travel budget for CCSTU appropriated in the same way as that of staff employed under the MOP(S) Act? If not, from where is it appropriated?
- d) Can you provide the committee with an updated estimate of annual costs of operation of the CCSTU, including salaries, travel expenses, ministerial and parliamentary staff allowance, administrative expenses, and other?
- e) Can you provide an update on any assets that may have been added to Suite MG-3 since October 2008?

F75(a-e) (RONALDSON)-AEC

- a) Has the AEC formally requested by way of budget submission extra funding to cover any additional costs that they will incur, assuming the passage of the *Commonwealth Electoral Amendment (Political Donations and Other Measures) Bill 2008*?
- b) What is the AEC's internal estimation of the additional cost to the AEC of implementing the proposed changes in the Bill?
- c) How many extra staff are you planning to put on because of changes in the Bill?
- d) What is the expected cost of any additional IT requirements, including software, to give effect to the proposed changes in the Bill?
- e) What is the expected timeframe between the passage of the Bill and the full implementation of its requirements by the AEC?
- f) If the Prime Minister were to call an early election for late 2009, how would that effect your implementation plans?
- g) Are there any plans for the amalgamation of DRO offices in the next 12 months? If so, in which electorates?

F76 (SIEWERT)-AEC

- a) How much has been spent by the Australian Electoral Commission on holding secret ballots for protected industrial action since they were introduced?

F77(a-e) (BOYCE)-DFD

The Additional Estimate Papers state that there will be an additional \$25 million over 4 years provided for the Department to complete a review into Governmental use of information and communication technology.

- a) Can the Department breakdown the exact areas in which this money is being spent on during the review?
- b) Does the review have any specific outcomes that performance can be measured against? Can the Department outline these outcomes?
- c) How will the review of government communication make it less costly for government to advertise?
- d) The Australian Financial Review reported in December that the Department is establishing a Multi-Use list of communications experts interested in working in Australian government advertising and information campaigns. What is the exact criteria for communications experts wishing to be included on this list?

- e) What are the names of communications experts who are currently on this list?

F78(a-c) (BOYCE)-AEC

I refer to question on notice F8 from the Supplementary Estimate Hearings, where I asked about wheelchair accessible polling booths and improvements in accessibility between 2004-2007.

The AEC's answer was that 78% of polling booths in 2004 were wheelchair accessible and in 2007 there was 79.1%.

- a) Does the AEC have a target percentage for wheelchair accessible booths and how is the AEC planning to exceed 79.1%?
- b) The AEC noted that it has improved the polling place inspection checklist for the purposes of grading polling booths. Can the AEC make this checklist available?
- c) The AEC was budgeted over \$14 million in 2008-09 to encourage 'an informed community'. Is any of this money being spent to provide additional services in informing disabled Australians about the election system and process? Can you outline how this money is being spent?

F79(a-i) (JOHNSTON)-DFD (Transfer from DEWHA)

- a) Please provide the names, salaries, titles and responsibilities of all staff in Minister Wong's office.
- b) Please indicate what their salaries were in October 2007 (or when they started)
- c) Please indicate what their salaries are now
- d) Please identify which staff have government cars as part of their package
- e) What model vehicles do they drive?
- f) What is the cost of the vehicle packages?
- g) Which staff are entitled to fly business class
- h) What is the home base for each of the staff?
- i) If they are not located in Sydney or Canberra, what is the reason?

F81(a-f) (BIRMINGHAM)-DFD (Transfer from DEWHA)

- a) Please provide the names, salaries, titles and responsibilities of all staff in Minister Garrett's office.
- b) Please indicate what their salaries were in October 2007 (or, if later, when they started), and what their salaries are now.
- c) How many and which staff in the Minister's office are entitled to vehicles as part of their package? What model vehicles do they drive?
- d) What is the cost of the vehicle packages?
- e) Which staff are entitled to fly business class?
- f) What is the home base for each of the staff? If they are not located in Sydney or Canberra, what is the reason?

F82(a-c) (PAYNE)-DFD

The Government has stated that it committed to releasing surplus government land for housing purposes. In September 2008, Housing Minister Tanya Plibersek, responding to a Question on Notice, said that the commonwealth had released the following land for sale (West Wattle Grove (Syd), Cannon Hill (Bris) and Schofields (Syd)).

- a) For the West Wattle Grove and Schofields sites, are there any updates on this process?
- b) Will the future use of this land be for housing?
- c) Will the Commonwealth Government consider transferring ownership of these Defence sites to State Governments as part of its response to the shortage of public housing?