

Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration

ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates Hearing – February 2010

Department of Finance and Deregulation

Finance and Deregulation Portfolio

Attachment A.4

Terms of Reference

Review of the Australian Government's use of Information and Communication Technology

1. The review will examine and report on the effectiveness and efficiency of the Australian Government's current use of information and communication technology (ICT) to determine whether the Government is realising the greatest return from its investments in ICT, including the way in which ICT can be used to meet the Government's broader objectives, as well as a narrower financial return. The review will examine whether we have the right institutional arrangements in place to maximise the return, and the means by which the return might be increased.
2. In determining this, the review will consider the following issues:
 - a. how ICT has benefited the operations of government and how that benefit is measured;
 - b. the adequacy of current coordination of ICT business planning and investment decision-making processes and the options for and benefits of a stronger ICT framework and/or greater coordination if current arrangements are inadequate;
 - c. the existing ICT investments of agencies and whether there are opportunities to maximise the use of new and existing ICT investments in order to meet the Government's broader objectives;
 - d. the possible duplication of ICT systems (such as financial and human resource management) across government agencies, whether opportunity exists to consolidate existing or new systems, and what form any consolidation should take;
 - e. the duplication of business processes across, and within agencies, and the effects this has on the costs to government and the quality of service delivery;
 - f. barriers posed by existing legacy ICT investments across agencies and the potential for more consistency in new investments;
 - g. how agencies manage their staffing requirements for ICT projects, whether there are opportunities to improve the efficient use of staff and contract resources, and whether competitive pressures are driving up costs;
 - h. the existing ICT governance framework that guides the Australian Government's use of ICT to deliver government outcomes;

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- i. the possible role of the Department of Finance and Deregulation, or a similar central body, in contributing to more efficient and effective use of ICT across government; and
 - j. any other matters as they arise, in consultation with the Minister for Finance and Deregulation.
3. To collect relevant information on the above issues, the review will focus on the use of ICT in selected Australian Government agencies that are a mix of large and small users of ICT.
4. The review will provide a snapshot of the current state of ICT in the Australian Government, what exists and how it is managed to deliver Government objectives.
5. The review will have regard to the best practice approaches of other Australian and international jurisdictions and the private sector.
6. The review will also have regard to planned work on whole-of-government ICT procurement.
7. The review must prepare a report for the Minister for Finance and Deregulation by September 2008. The report should set out recommendations to the Australian Government to drive greater efficiency in the use of ICT across government while enhancing or improving the capacity of ICT to support service and program delivery.
8. In formulating recommendations that the Australian Government should take a particular course of action, the review should assess the resourcing, costs, benefits and any implementation risks of that action.