

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

Outcome General, Program General

Topic: Freedom of Information

Question reference number: F84

Type of Question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 26 March 2010

Number of Pages: 1

Senator Barnett asked:

- a) Has the Department/agency received any advice on how to respond to FOI requests?
- b) How many FOI requests has the Department received?
- c) How many have been granted or denied?
- d) How many conclusive certificates have been issued in relation to FOI requests?

Answer:

As no timeframe has been specified the question has been interpreted as applying to the last full calendar year – 2009.

- a) The only advice received by the Department of Finance and Deregulation (Finance) during 2009 on how to respond to FOI requests was a letter from Senator the Hon John Faulkner, then Cabinet Secretary and Special Minister of State to Agency Heads, including to the then Secretary of the Department of Finance and Deregulation (Finance), dated 30 April 2009;
- b) During 2009, Finance received 50 FOI requests.
- c) Of the FOI requests received by Finance in 2009, 19 were granted in full, 9 were granted in part and 9 were refused. Some FOI requests were withdrawn and others were still in progress at the end of 2009 and will be completed in 2010.
- d) The power to issue conclusive certificates was removed in October 2009 by the *Freedom of Information (Removal of Conclusive Certificate and Other Measures) Act 2009*. Prior to this, Finance had not issued any conclusive certificates.