

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
ADDITIONAL BUDGET ESTIMATES 2010-2011

Finance and Deregulation Portfolio

Department: Finance and Deregulation

Outcome/Program 3/3.1

Topic: Electrical Testing and Tagging Equipment in Electorate Offices

Senator: Abetz

Question reference number: F33

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Number of pages: 2

Question:

- a) What are the specific details of the current contract for testing and tagging including but not limited to duration, cost per item, requirements and range of tests conducted?
- b) Was this contract subject to a tender process?
- c) What are the recommended intervals between inspection and testing for electrical equipment?
- d) Does the current provider have offices in every state? Could tagging be achieved more cost effectively to award contract on state-by-state basis?
- e) Are records of testing kept in each office? Are hard copies provided or can results be easily obtained?

Answer:

- a) Ministerial and Parliamentary Services (M&PS) has a contract with UGL Services Pty Ltd (UGL Services) for the provision of property services in electorate offices. Under this contract, UGL Services arranged an electrical testing and tagging contract for all electorate and Commonwealth Parliament Offices with Appliance Tagging Services Pty Ltd (ATS).

The ATS contract commenced on 3 February 2010 and expires on 14 July 2012.

The cost per item under the ATS contract is \$3.50 (plus GST) per item for leads and cords, and \$18.50 (plus GST) for microwave oven leakage tests. In addition, ATS replaces all double adaptors and power boards without overload protection with new power boards with overload protection at a cost of \$6.50 (plus GST) per power board.

Electrical tests are undertaken on all Commonwealth owned equipment excluding IT equipment. IT equipment is leased under a separate arrangement and it is the responsibility of the provider to ensure the IT equipment is fit for purpose. Microwave ovens are checked for leaks and removed immediately if a leak is found.

- b) Yes.
- c) The electrical equipment falls into two categories which are known as 'hostile' and 'non-hostile'. Items classified as hostile are those that are regularly plugged in and unplugged (e.g. phone charger) and non-hostile items are those that are rarely unplugged (e.g. refrigerator). Items considered non-hostile are tested every 5 years and items considered hostile are tested every 12 months. Microwave ovens are tested every 12 months.
- d) No. ATS has an office in Melbourne and has employees and sub-contractors in other locations. The competitive tender included state-by-state providers but found a national provider to be more cost effective.
- e) Records are not kept in electorate offices except to the extent that items that have previously been tested are tagged with a record of the check. Records are kept online. The results of tests could be provided to a Senator or Member for his or her electorate office on request to the Department of Finance and Deregulation.