

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
ADDITIONAL BUDGET ESTIMATES 2011-2012

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Australian Public Service Commission

Outcome/Program: Cross Portfolio

Topic: Efficiency Dividend

Senator: Humphries

Question reference number: 80

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 30 March 2012

Number of pages: 2

Question:

1. **What is the effect of the efficiency dividend increase from 1.5 percent to 4 percent on the department/agency's budget bottom line during financial years 2012/13, 13/14, 14/15?**
2. **What percentage of the department/agency's budget is designated to staffing?**
3. **What is the size of the department/agency's staffing establishment? Include figures for FTE, PT, casual, contractors, and consultants.**
4. **What specific strategies will the department/agency adopt to ensure continued operation within budget?**
5. **Will or has consideration been made to reducing staffing compliment including contractors, and consultants?**

Answer:

1. Appropriation funding for the Australian Public Service Commission (APSC) is reduced as follows in each financial year:
2012/13 \$584,000.
2013/14 \$556,000.
2014/15 \$561,000.
2. In 2011/12 employee expense is budgeted to be 58 per cent of all expenses.
3. In 2011/12 the budgeted average staffing level (ASL) for the APSC is 278, which includes an ASL of 14 for casual staff or tribunal members. Consultants are not included in any staffing figures.

4. The APSC operates within a balanced budget and adjusts spending across its activities as required to, wherever possible, sustain the core business as usual activities and provide some capacity to respond to changes in priorities or emerging issues. Prudent management and timing of resources, for example staffing arrangements, supplier commitments and payments, and broad expense reduction management initiatives such as the use of whole of government procurement should allow the Commission to operate within budget.
5. As a small agency with a modest appropriation budget there is no single set of expense items that can be reduced whilst maintaining operational effectiveness to meet the tight budget constraints. The APSC is examining all of its expense items, including staffing to identify savings to meet the requirements of the efficiency dividend.