

**Senate Finance & Public Administration Committee:
Answers to written Questions on Notice Additional Estimates 2012-13
Parliamentary Departments Portfolio**

Department: Parliamentary Budget Office

Topic: Categories of requests from political parties and individuals

Senator: Senator the Hon John Faulkner

Question reference number: 50

Type of question: Written

Question

Senator FAULKNER: I think you mentioned that you had 207 requests and that at the moment you have been able to respond to 152 of them. They were the statistics in your opening statement. I think that it would be helpful to have ongoing statistics; my question really goes to the nature of these statistics.

..... But would you be willing to disaggregate requests into categories such as requests from parties and individuals into the future? Or could you think of any other ways of disaggregating those statistics that you have a level of comfort with in terms of providing further and better information to the committee?

Mr Bowen: You are right. I have been and will continue to be reluctant to divulge sources of requests. But in terms of broad categorisation, I do not think there is any confidentiality issue. Let me say that the vast bulk of requests have come from political parties.

Senator FAULKNER: You might take that on notice and give that some consideration so that, over time, the committee can have a better understanding in terms of monitoring the work of the PBO whilst of course totally accepting that we do not want to trample into areas that might have any partisan implication? Could I ask you to take that on notice and give some consideration to it?

Mr Bowen: I am happy to do that. In fact, I can tell you that, with one exception, the requests have all come from parties.

Answer

The PBO will provide the Committee with regular updates of statistics on requests it receives, disaggregated into requests from individual parliamentarians and requests from political parties. A request will be deemed to be a request from a political party when it has been endorsed by the Party's leadership group.