

**Budget Estimates 2004-05
Questions on Notice Index
Finance and Administration Portfolio**

QoN No.	Dept/Agency	Senator	Hansard page	QUESTION	Comments
F1	ALL	Murray	Written	attached	DoFA 31/3/05 AEC 29/3/05 ComSuper 31/3/05 CSS 31/3/05 PSS 31/3/05 CGC 31/3/05
F2	DoFA	Bartlett	Written	attached	Answered 3/8/04
F3	AEC	Mason	Written	attached	Answered 26/7/04
F4	DoFA	Faulkner	F&PA12 26/5/04	Senator FAULKNER—Minister, can I very briefly ask which senior ministers were involved in the review? Senator Minchin—As you know, I like to be as transparent as possible but before taking it upon myself to inform you of that I would like to consult and hopefully provide you with an answer later in the day. Senator FAULKNER—When you come back, Minister, perhaps you could indicate to the committee which senior ministers were involved and give a very brief outline of the process so we understand. In other words, was it done as a result of a meeting? How did this process work?	Answered 26/7/04
F5	DoFA	Conroy	F&PA17 26/5/04	Senator CONROY—I can assure you of that, Senator Abetz. I am going on a study tour to attend it. The dialogue is closed and there is no reporting allowed of the discussions within it. Senator CONROY—I was wondering if you could take that on notice and give me some suggestions. Can you give it some thought as to how I should address that? Given they are now public documents I cannot quite be as free as I otherwise would have been.	Answered 26/7/04

QoN No.	Dept/Agency	Senator	Hansard page	QUESTION	Comments
F6	DoFA	Conroy	F&PA19-21 26/5/04	<p>Senator CONROY—Do you keep any historical data, so we could compare how big a spend this was in one budget? As I said, I remember the Treasurer on the night making the point that this one of the biggest spends in history, if not the biggest. I was wondering whether you keep any records of that so that we could easily make a comparison and see whether it was the biggest spend in any individual budget.</p> <p>[refer also to the discussion on F&PA19-20 down to:]</p> <p>Senator CONROY—I am looking to go back to 1996-97, obviously, the period of the Howard government.</p> <p>Dr Watt—We could provide that information.</p> <p>Senator CONROY—How quickly do you think you could knock that together?</p> <p>Dr Watt—I do not know. It might take a little while, but I will see what can be done.</p> <p>[F&PA21]</p> <p>Senator CONROY—I want to come back to a couple of points about historical data and about whether or not we could get a comparison between the spend this time and previous spends. I want to make it clear that I am only interested in spending and outlays, not revenues or anything like that. I understand there are all sorts of problems, such as GST is in or GST is out. I am only interested in the outlay spending side of that equation. Are you able to come back with that to us today? That is what led me off into the discussion about—</p> <p>Dr Watt—You are looking for the comparisons from 1996-97 on?</p> <p>Senator CONROY—From 1996.</p> <p>Dr Watt—And you are looking for comparisons across the current year and the forward estimates?</p> <p>Senator CONROY—Yes.</p>	Answered 29/7/04
F7	DoFA	Conroy	F&PA30 26/5/04	<p>Senator CONROY—Can I ask for a total then rather than a descriptive?</p> <p>Senator Minchin—Do you mean the number?</p> <p>Senator CONROY—Yes. Would that reveal any state secrets?</p> <p>Senator Minchin—I do not know. I am happy to take that on notice if what you asking for is X number of policies that have been costed. I am happy to take that on notice.</p> <p>Senator CONROY—If you could break that down into the period since 2001, the last 12 months and the last six months that would be helpful.</p> <p>Senator Minchin—Again, I will take that on notice.</p>	Answered 29/7/04

QoN No.	Dept/Agency	Senator	Hansard page	QUESTION	Comments
F8	DoFA	Conroy	F&PA36 26/5/04	<p>Senator CONROY—I am just looking at an answer that Telstra have sent us. It is an answer to question 119. It is from Communications, so you guys would not necessarily be familiar with it. Do they check these with you?</p> <p>Mr Heazlett—No.</p> <p>Senator CONROY—Do they run anything past you?</p> <p>Mr Heazlett—No, not necessarily.</p> <p>Dr Watt—Senator, we have not seen that answer—</p> <p>Senator CONROY—I am actually just attempting to get it for you.</p> <p>Dr Watt—nor have we seen the context surrounding it. I think what Mr Heazlett said is that it is our understanding that this is not a decision for the department of finance but something that is required by an act of parliament. Therefore, while we are not familiar with what Telstra may or may not have said, I do not think we can really comment any further.</p> <p>Senator CONROY—It was a question taken on notice that Senator Mackay asked. Senator Mackay asked about the forward estimates and the answer, dividends paid, was given through to 2003-04—so it was up to when they had. Their answer says:</p> <p>Telstra’s directors are responsible for declaring and paying dividends and the issue of dividends in relation to forward estimates is a matter for the Department of Finance.</p> <p>Dr Watt—We would certainly need to look at that answer because that is not our understanding of the issue.</p> <p>Senator CONROY—I will try and get it to you as quickly as I can. That is what has got me confused here. You are saying it is them and they are saying it is you.</p> <p>Mr Heazlett—I think what is meant there is that the department of finance is responsible for determining what is put into the budget estimates. The basis on which we put numbers into the budget estimates is information provided to us by Telstra under the Telstra act.</p> <p>Mr Lewis—It is under a specific provision of the act, in relation to which the department of finance does need to protect that information provided confidentially to the department.</p> <p>Dr Watt—The simplest thing might to take the question on notice and give you a formal answer.</p> <p>Senator CONROY—Sure.</p>	Answered 26/7/04
F9	DoFA	Conroy	F&PA37 26/5/04	<p>Senator CONROY—I wanted to talk about the treatment of superannuation expenses in light of the lump sum payments to Telstra and Australia Post earlier this year. When did negotiations for this payment commence?</p>	Answered 29/7/04

QoN No.	Dept/Agency	Senator	Hansard page	QUESTION	Comments
F10	DoFA	Conroy	F&PA39 & 40 26/5/04	[F&PA39] Senator CONROY—What is the breakdown between interest and principal? Mr Painton—Because the Commonwealth had been making payments each year on the basis that it was paying interest first, it would have effectively paid out most of the outstanding interest as it went along. Some smaller principal amounts have been paid out. In 2003-04, the Commonwealth would have paid \$482 million under the existing stream of payments. Senator CONROY—I thought you said \$500 million. Mr Painton—I do not have the exact figure in front of me but I can provide that to you shortly. [F&PA40] Senator CONROY—To add to Mr Painton’s difficulties, can I have a breakdown of the \$500 million? You said you are paying \$500 million a year roughly.	Answered 29/7/04
F11	DoFA	Conroy	F&PA41 26/5/04	Senator CONROY—When I have been talking about \$3,125 million, that was probably for Telstra. There is another \$1,443 million. Mr Painton—The \$1,443 million for Australia Post, if the determinations go through, is due to be paid out right at the start of 2004-05. If they are paid out at the start of the year, no interest is going to accrue in relation to that year because the payment basically occurs before any further interest is accruing. In effect, all the remaining interest in relation to Telstra and Post would be paid out during 2003-04; therefore, you would make a final payment for Post at the start of 2004-05, which would not incur any further interest. Dr Watt—We would be happy to prepare something for you on the accounting for the transaction. It is very complex, because you are talking about— Senator CONROY—I am afraid I have long been left behind, so I appreciate the offer. Dr Watt—We would be happy to prepare something for you on the subject.	Answered 29/7/04
F12	DoFA	Conroy	F&PA43 26/5/04	Senator CONROY—You mentioned that there were some financing costs associated with the lump sum. Is that right, Mr Painton? Mr Painton—That is correct, yes. Senator CONROY—Could you take us through what they were? Mr Hutson—That really comes down to the split of the \$3.125 million between interest and principal. That is a question which— Senator CONROY—When you take that on notice, if you could just give me that additional piece of information, that would be good. Dr Watt—We will give you that.	Answered 29/7/04
F13	DoFA	Conroy	F&PA47 26/5/04	Senator CONROY—By the time it got started it was probably just over six months. It refers to ‘travel including airfares, accommodation, meals and incidentals’. Can I get a breakdown of the rough proportions of the \$25,388 that were travel, accommodation, meals and incidentals and can I get some rough description of what the incidentals were? [Uhrig review] Dr Watt—I am sure we can provide that, but it might be more sensible to take it on notice. Senator CONROY—That would be good.	Answered 29/7/04

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F14	DoFA	Ray	F&PA53 26/5/04	Senator ROBERT RAY—The easier way to ask this is: when was the adviser's position abolished and when was the new position of adviser created? What is the timing? Then we might be able to understand. Mr Edge—I would have to take that on notice. We should be able to get the answer for you quite quickly. I just do not have the information here.	Answered 26/7/04
F15	DoFA	Faulkner	F&PA53 26/5/04	Senator FAULKNER—I am not taking a whack at Ms Savva at all. I ask you then, Minister, to acknowledge or inform the committee if the additional media adviser in Minister Kemp's office is Niki Savva? Can you confirm that? Senator Abetz—I will take that on notice.	Answered 26/7/04
F16	DoFA	Ray	F&PA55 26/5/04	Senator ROBERT RAY—Do we know the expected salary payout that has been budgeted for in the next budget for this particular secretariat? Senator Abetz—I think we will have to take that on notice. Ms Mason—We will. ... Senator ROBERT RAY—That is the amount of salary and allowance? Most of these people would be on a ministerial staff allowance, I assume. Mr Edge—We are not able to confirm that at the moment. The remuneration is obviously linked to the positions and the level of the positions.	Answered 26/7/04
F17	DoFA	Ray	F&PA57 26/5/04	Senator ROBERT RAY—Could you tell us what level Mr Wheeler is employed at? ... Senator ROBERT RAY—I repeat the question. I do not want to assume anything. I want to know an answer to my question, not what I might be expected to assume. Senator Abetz—I will take that on notice and give it consideration as to whether I want to make that information available.	Answered 26/7/04
F18	DoFA	Ray	F&PA58 26/5/04	Senator ROBERT RAY—Are all members of the Government Members Secretariat paid within the standardised salary bands—are there any positions being paid outside that? Ms Mason—We will need to take that question on notice so we can check our records.	Answered 26/7/04
F19	DoFA	Ray/Murray	F&PA65 26/5/04	Senator ROBERT RAY—To help me, could you take this question on notice. For the year 2002-03, could I have a list of who represented ministers, where they went and at what cost? Senator Abetz—Overseas. Senator ROBERT RAY—Overseas, 2002-03, so all the bills should be in well and truly. Mr Gavin—We will give you a copy of the pages. Senator ROBERT RAY—That would be good. Senator MURRAY—And for what function.	Answered 3/8/04

QoN No.	Dept/Agency	Senator	Hansard page	QUESTION	Comments
F20	DoFA	Murray	F&PA66 26/5/04	<p>Senator MURRAY—Thank you. That is of assistance. My interest, Minister and Mr Barnes, is this: where people have legitimate concerns, I think it is fair enough whether or not you regard them as valid. If they regard them as valid that is a reasonable approach for them to take—they want satisfaction before they will sign off. I am concerned with those who do not sign off and who have left the parliament. I would seek to ascertain from the department whether, now that the new processes have been introduced—and they are much improved processes; my compliments to the department—future instances of people who have left the parliament simply refusing to certify and sign off on their accounts will no longer occur, or if they do occur whether there is some means of penalising the people concerned.</p> <p>Mr Barnes—The difficulty with the situation is that there is no compulsion for certification. On that basis there is no authority for us to follow up.</p> <p>Senator MURRAY—I am thinking of an age-old contractual device which the minister would recognise and that is just withholding final payments until matters are certified. I would be interested as to whether if at the end of a parliamentarian's period of service—and that is about to happen for a number of parliamentarians with the coming election—it is legal or feasible for a certain payment to be withheld from a parliamentarian until such time as the final accounts are certified. You can take this on notice because I am not sure you can answer across the floor.</p>	Answered 26/7/04
F21	AEC	Faulkner	F&PA69 26/5/04	<p>Senator FAULKNER—Would it be possible to table that DEWR document? You may not have it with you.</p> <p>Ms Davis—I do not have it with me.</p> <p>Senator FAULKNER—If it could be provided to the committee as soon as you have it available, I would appreciate it and I am sure others would, too.</p> <p>Ms Davis—Yes, I can try to organise that.</p>	Answered 31//5/04
F22	AEC	Faulkner	F&PA71 26/5/04	<p>Senator FAULKNER—... Can you give us a little bit of an indication, say, from 1 January 2003, of what overseas travel of members of the commission and senior executives of the AEC we have had?</p> <p>Mr Becker—I think we would probably have to take that on notice.</p> <p>Ms Davis—We may be able to respond in a moment. We are just looking up some figures here. Sorry, we will not be able to tell you today. Can we take that on notice?</p> <p>Senator FAULKNER—If you would take it on notice, I would appreciate it. I would like the costs of that overseas travel. What are your accounting arrangements? They are probably done on a financial year basis?</p> <p>Ms Davis—Yes.</p> <p>Senator FAULKNER—Why don't we make it easier for you and say from 1 July 2003? Would that be easier in terms of providing that answer to the committee?</p> <p>Ms Davis—Yes.</p> <p>...</p> <p>Senator FAULKNER—Yes, just AEC funded travel, thanks.</p> <p>...</p> <p>Senator FAULKNER—Yes, just overseas travel ... If you could provide the detail of the dates, destinations, costs and the like, that would be helpful.</p>	Answered 26/7/04

QoN No.	Dept/Agency	Senator	Hansard page	QUESTION	Comments
F23	AEC	Faulkner/ Murray	F&PA73 26/5/04	<p>Senator FAULKNER—I think that is a very reasonable way to answer the question that I have asked. I have heard those figures that you have given. Are you able to be precise in those figures. I accept that they are thereabouts—300,000 and 60,000. Do you have precise figures?</p> <p>Mr Hallett—I have, but not with me. I could take that on notice and they could easily be provided.</p> <p>...</p> <p>Senator MURRAY—...But as we know from the JSCM report and your evidence to that committee, there is a very substantial number of Australians who just do not want to be on the roll at all. Perhaps you would add that to your answers.</p>	Answered 26/7/04
F24	AEC	Faulkner	F&PA74 26/5/04	<p>Senator FAULKNER—Have you had any contact with the various corrective services agencies through your state divisions about advice released prisoners are given in relation to enrolment? Do you know whether any proactive steps are taken?</p> <p>Mr Dacey—No, I do not. I am not aware of any, but I can take that on notice.</p> <p>Senator FAULKNER—Would you mind just checking for us, on notice, whether there are any?</p> <p>Mr Dacey—Yes, we will.</p>	Answered 26/7/04
F25	AEC	Brandis	F&PA91 26/5/04	<p>Senator BRANDIS—I have a couple of questions, and you might want to take these on notice. Firstly, what is the total cost in 2003-04 for the provision of electoral roll data to MPs and others by means of ELIAS? How many MPs who receive ELIAS actually make use of it?</p> <p>Mr Becker—I do not know that we could tell you much about the latter.</p> <p>Mr Dacey—So you are asking how many we send it to, which parties get ELIAS and the cost?</p>	Answered 26/7/04
F26	AEC	Brandis	F&PA91 26/5/04	<p>Senator BRANDIS—Yes. My second group of questions—and I am sure that you will need to take these on notice—is: are there any plans for any polling both at the next federal election to be located outside the electorates which they are set up to serve? If so, at which locations, for which electorates and for what reasons?</p> <p>Mr Becker—There will be some. Since we have had a round of redistributions just recently, we might have a few more than we would otherwise have. I would have to take that on notice.</p>	Answered 26/7/04
F27	DoFA	Faulkner	Written	Attached	Answered 3/8/04

F1

Senator Murray

SENATE ESTIMATES HEARINGS

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
TO EACH DEPARTMENT AND AGENCY IN EACH PORTFOLIO**

Please provide a list of all advertising or public information projects currently being undertaken or expected to be undertaken by the department or agency in the course of 2004 where the cost of the project is estimated or contracted to be \$100 000 or more, indicating:

- (a) the purpose and nature of the project;
- (b) the intended recipients of the information to be communicated by the project;
- (c) who authorised or is to authorise the project;
- (d) the manner in which the project is to be carried out;
- (e) who is to carry out the project;
- (f) whether the project is to be carried out under a contract;
- (g) whether such contract was let by tender;
- (h) the estimated or contracted cost of the project.

Please provide this information by the next sitting of the Senate on 15 June 2004.

F2

Senator Bartlett

DoFA—Outcome 3 - Output 3.1.1.

How many Senators and Members have claimed overseas study leave in each of the financial years from 2000/1, 2001/2, 2002/3, and to the end of May 2004?

For each Senator and Member that did travel for this purpose:

- What are their names?
- Were they accompanied by a spouse or partner?
- Please provide a copy of the mandatory report provided to the Special Minister of State for each of these Parliamentarians.

How many Senators and Members have travelled on delegations through the Australian Political Exchange Council trip in each of the financial years from 2000/1, 2001/2, 2002/3, and to the end of May 2004?

For each Senator and Member that did travel for this purpose:

- What are their names?
- Was there any provision for spouse or partner travel?

**Senate Finance and Public Legislation Committee
Budget Estimates May 2004**

**AEC: ANAO Audit Report 39 2003/4
Follow-Up Audit "Integrity of the Electoral Roll"**

Page 25 2.18 AEC plan doesn't set minimum frequencies for CRU activities, nor strong commitment to identifying and addressing current gaps. Why not?

Page 28 2.31 Why hasn't AEC made more rigorous analysis of the range of data sources available and more strenuous efforts to access them?
e.g. 2.42 AEC says will "soon" have access to state road transport data – when?

Page 35 2.61 Given that a federal election is due before April 2005, can AEC update estimate of number of eligible Australians who currently aren't on the roll? (JSCM estimate was 550,000 eligible Australians at the time of the 2001 election) If they don't accept the JSCM estimate, what work has AEC done to quantify this figure? e.g. do they have (from ABS data) an estimate of the number of adult Australians who should be on the roll. (note page 38 3.2 in 2001 the AWC was "unable to provide the JSCM with information on the accuracy of the roll." Is this still the case?)

Page 36 2.66 What is the purpose of the Youth Electoral Study? How much will it cost? (Delays in implementing the recommendations of previous reports have been attributed to lack of money.)

Page 46 3.36 Why did the AEC embark on a statistically invalid pilot exercise to review the accuracy of the roll? How much did this aborted pilot cost?

Page 46 3.38 Has the new sample of 227 CCDs been completed. With what results? If not, when is the report expected and will it be given to the JSCM?

Page 51 3.61 Has the AEC delivered the enrolment fraud awareness package to staff?

Page 53 3.73 What is the outcome of the system for reporting information on enrolment forms verification? Has this been implemented?

Page 53 3.76 Has the Isaacs total habitation review been completed? With what results? If not, when is the report expected and will it be given to the JSCM?

NB: Where AEC becomes aware (through returned mail etc) that an enrolment is in question; is there a flag to indicate that if that person turns up on election day at a

polling booth they should be asked to verify their identity and enrolment eligibility? Once the vote has been cast, it is too late to subsequently complete the verification process and then find that the person should not have been enrolled, e.g. the electoral mail out by the ECQ to "enrolled" voters for the QLD state election showed a return rate of 1.88%. Has the AEC liaised with the ECQ to try and update rolls following the conduct of the state and local government elections?

F27

Senator Faulkner

QUESTION ON NOTICE

SENATE F&PA LEGISLATION COMMITTEE

BUDGET ESTIMATES MAY 2004

Senator Faulkner to ask of the Department of Finance and Administration:

1. On how many occasions since 1 January 2004 to date has there been a request from a Federal Member of Parliament or a Senator for access to a report submitted to the Special Minister of State pursuant to Parliamentarians' study leave entitlement?
2. For each of these instances, please advise a) the name of the MP/Senator requesting the access, b) the name of the MP/Senator who submitted the requested report, c) the dates of the travel undertaken, d) the date of the request?
3. What are the restrictions, if any, on the use which can be made of reports provided pursuant to a request from an MP or Senator?