

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
BUDGET ESTIMATES 2012-2013

Finance and Deregulation Portfolio

Department/Agency: ASC Pty Ltd
Outcome/Program:
Topic: Consultancies

Senator: Johnston
Question reference number: F75
Type of question: Written
Date set by the committee for the return of answer: Friday, 6 July 2012

Number of pages: 1

Question:

It is noted that ASC declined to properly answer Question on Notice 1501 asking for a details of ASC and Deep Blue Tech Consultancies (QON 1501).

You stated that *“to do so could harm the Commonwealth and the nation's interests by prejudicing the ability of the companies to engage experts in the future to assist with the resolution of submarine issues and could give other nations insight into Australia's defence preparedness.”*

It is not reasonable to deny disclosure of consultancies on national security grounds. The Department of Defence, the prime agency charged with national defence, publishes all of its consultancies on the AUSTENDER website. See also Defence's response to Senator Eggleston's question on notice Q57 to Defence and the level of detail provided in their response. Note also that is unacceptable for an Australian GBE to conduct business with organisations secretly.

Please provide a list of consultants engaged across the ASC Group and the amount of money paid to each consultancy over the past four years?

Answer:

Information provided by the Department of Defence in relation to consultancies, is part of their obligations as a *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997* agency.

ASC Pty Ltd is subject to the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997*, and is subject to different disclosure requirements.

As a commercial entity, ASC maintains that it *“could harm the Commonwealth and the nation's interests by prejudicing the ability of the companies to engage experts in the future to assist with the resolution of submarine issues and could give other nations insight into Australia's defence preparedness.”*