

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
BUDGET ESTIMATES 2013-2014

Finance and Deregulation Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of Finance and Deregulation

Outcome/Program: 3/3.1

Topic: Use of Publications Entitlement – digital subscriptions

Senator: Carr

Question reference number: F34

Type of question: Hansard F&PA Committee, Page 39-40

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: Friday 12 July 2013

Number of pages: 1

Question:

I am wondering how long it has been since the department updated its processes for the approvals for accessing the communications allowance, particularly with regard to digital subscriptions.

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Many newspapers require credit card details for periodical subscriptions. They are often short-term subscriptions; they are not long-term subscriptions. It is different for a printed newspaper whereby you can have a direct relationship with the newsagent; you have a relationship with the publishers of a periodical. I am wondering what the department's processes are for the approval of access to the communications allowance for that matter.

Answer:

Senators and Members are responsible for forwarding certified and itemised accounts to the Department of Finance and Deregulation (Finance) for payment. Finance will pay the supplier directly where a supplier is willing to provide an invoice for publications (such as is the arrangement with many newsagents).

Where a supplier requires up-front payment for the purchase of a subscription (such as an online publication) a Senator or Member will seek reimbursement. In order to process the reimbursement Finance must be provided with a tax receipt as proof of payment.

On limited occasions, on-line subscription services do not provide a tax receipt. One way for a Senator or Member to confirm a payment has been made in these instances is to provide a redacted credit card statement which details the relevant purchases and purchaser.