

Estimates 2006-07 — Supplementary Budget Estimates, October 2006

Questions on Notice Index—Finance and Administration portfolio

QON No.	Department / agency	Senator	Hansard reference	Question	Comments
F1	AEC	RAY	F&PA 4	<p>Senator ROBERT RAY—Do we have a costing? How much have these various assistances cost? How many of them have been funded by AusAID?</p> <p>Mr Dacey—All of the ones I have mentioned have been funded by AusAID. I am not sure whether we have the costs with us, but we can get those costs for you.</p>	Answer received 2/02/07
F2	AEC	RAY	F&PA 5	<p>Senator ROBERT RAY—How much has been invested in the BRIDGE electoral administrators course?</p> <p>Mr Dacey—I would have to take that on notice.</p> <p>Mr Campbell—Do you have a time frame within which you want to—</p> <p>Senator ROBERT RAY—Let us make it easy. Let us look at the last financial year. That might be the easiest one. I notice that you have an implementation manual. Would it be possible for the committee to have a copy of that?</p> <p>Mr Dacey—Yes, it would.</p>	Answer received 2/02/07

QON No.	Department / agency	Senator	Hansard reference	Question	Comments
F3	AEC	Faulkner	F&PA 7	<p>Senator FAULKNER—Specifically, I was going to ask you about the electoral roll in the Torres Strait. I read an article in a local newspaper about major concerns there during the recent state election in Queensland. I wanted to know whether there were particular problems and whether that had been identified by the AEC. The divisional returning officer for Leichhardt is publicly quoted as saying that there seems to be a higher than usual number of incidents involving voters not on the rolls. Is anyone from the AEC able to confirm whether the particular problem here has been identified? If so, is any remedial action being taken to try to address this situation?</p> <p>Mr Campbell—The DRO has done a review of what happened in the Torres Strait in the September election and has provided a report to the state manager. I would have to speak to her to find out where she is up to with action following on from that review. But there certainly was a review done. I can provide that to you.</p> <p>Senator FAULKNER—I would be interested in understanding the outcomes of the review; what, if any, follow-up action has been taken; and if this is just a small sample of broader problems or there are issue specific to the Torres Strait and Thursday Island, where they have been identified.</p> <p>Mr Campbell—My understanding of what happened was that the DRO had two conclusions—but I will provide you with a response. The first conclusion was that it was not as severe a problem as some of the media might have put it. That is not to say that there was not a problem. Secondly, he thought it was, if you like, isolated to the area in which they were talking about. It was tied up with people moving in the area but not informing us. Therefore, when we were doing a roll check, we were not getting responses to letters. I will come back to you with a formal response about where the action is up to.</p>	Answer received 2/02/07
F4	AEC	FAULKNER	F&PA 10	<p>Senator FAULKNER—And was Senator Abetz the Special Minister of State when he referred that?</p> <p>Mr Bodel—No, he was not.</p> <p>Senator FAULKNER—Can you give me the date of referral of that matter? You can take it on notice.</p> <p>Mr Bodel—Yes. I can get back to you with that.</p>	Answer received 2/02/07

QON No.	Department / agency	Senator	Hansard reference	Question	Comments
F5	AEC	RAY	F&PA 10	<p>Senator ROBERT RAY—If it is still with the AFP, I will not pursue it any further. Again, I am basing this next question on a newspaper report; the second qualification is that it is from the <i>Australian</i>. I am not sure how much credibility you want to give it. The <i>Australian</i> of 31 August, on page 2, says that a very prominent Queensland businessman and former member of the Liberal Party, Mr Russell Galt, 'claims the federal Liberal Party set up a secret account that paid \$140,000 to end his court case against Dr Flegg'. Has there been any investigation about this account? Do we know whether it exists or whether it is just a rhetorical claim made by a disaffected party member?</p> <p>Mr Bodel—We are not aware of the specifics of the case you are referring to, but I will look at it.</p>	Answer received 2/02/07
F6	AEC	RAY	F&PA 11	<p>Mr Campbell—Yes, Senator. You might be aware that there is a particular section in the act—section 63A—and you know that there is a projection time frame that is set up which is the norm. Section 63A enables the Electoral Commission to actually shorten that term if there is going to be a change in the state. So, when the process of setting up the redistribution was undertaken in Queensland, it was decided to use a shortened time there because all of the indications from the figures we have from the Bureau of Statistics say that, when we get to 12 months after the 2007 election, the quota will mean that Queensland will get another seat and will go from 29 to 30.</p> <p>Senator ROBERT RAY—Is there any problem with supplying the committee with your projections?</p> <p>Mr Campbell—No.</p>	Answer received 2/02/07

QON No.	Department / agency	Senator	Hansard reference	Question	Comments
F7	AEC	RAY	F&PA 11/12	<p>Senator ROBERT RAY—Can you give us an update on the implementation of the Minter Ellison review on postal voting support services.</p> <p>Mr Pickering—Senator, the recommendations of the Minter Ellison report were fed into the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters as well—a copy of the report was provided to them—and a number of those recommendations came out as recommendations of the committee as well. All of those recommendations are being acted on and I would be happy to provide you with a status report, on notice, on those recommendations if that would help.</p> <p>Senator ROBERT RAY—Yes, that would be good.</p>	Answer received 2/02/07
F8	AEC	FAULKNER	F&PA 13	<p>Senator FAULKNER—Mr Campbell, is there any reason why this research report could not be tabled to save a bit of time? I assume there is not.</p> <p>Mr Campbell—Can I take that on notice. My advice is that it is traditional that it not be tabled until after the campaign. But I am not so sure that I would agree with that. Can I take that on notice. I have no problem, certainly, in giving to the committee the very detailed outcomes of what the research showed. But, as to whether I can give you the actual report or not, I have to take advice on that. I am getting the word here that traditionally it would not be the report.</p>	Answer received 2/02/07
F9	AEC	RAY	F&PA 16	<p>Senator ROBERT RAY—What is the cost of this production? I have issue No. 2, August 2006. What does this cost to produce?</p> <p>Ms Urbanski—I do not have that information with me, but we can get that for you. Could I also add that <i>The Tally Board</i> is also published on our website, so it is available to the general public</p>	Answer received 2/02/07
F10	AEC	NASH	F&PA 22	<p>Senator NASH—I think it would be quite useful for the committee to have a list of things they are not allowed to do if they are not registered as a political party. Could you provide a complete list of that to the committee.</p> <p>Mr Bodel—Absolutely.</p>	Answer received 2/02/07

QON No.	Department / agency	Senator	Hansard reference	Question	Comments
F11	AEC	FIFIELD	F&PA 25	<p>CHAIR—To your knowledge, are the electoral bodies that are members of that organisation from countries that are themselves democracies in every case?</p> <p>Mr Dacey—Yes, they are. I could provide the committee with a list of the member states.</p>	Answer received 9/02/07
F12	DoFA	RAY	F&PA 27	<p>Senator ROBERT RAY—So how many National Party members of staff are there?</p> <p>Ms Clarke—Senator, I will get that information as to what the staffing ratios were when the SRG was formed.</p>	Answer received 29/1/07
F13	DoFA	RAY	F&PA 27	<p>Senator ROBERT RAY—No, you do not need to check that. I am just trying to check what this contract is for. What is the value of this contract? Are you able to tell us that?</p> <p>Ms Clarke—I can get that information. I do not have it on hand at the moment.</p>	Answer received 29/1/07
F14	DoFA	FAULKNER	F&PA 27-28	<p>Senator FAULKNER—The dollar figure would be useful, but I would be interested in knowing precisely what the contractual responsibilities are of this particular group. Are you able to tell the committee what the contractual obligations of Heaney Blaylock and Associates are to MAPS? Can you do that?</p> <p>Ms Clarke—I will certainly get the description of the consultancy, but in broad terms it is about providing advice on matters to do with workplace relations. I will get the description of the consultancy and read that out to you.</p>	Answer received 29/1/07
F15	DoFA	FAULKNER	F&PA 33	<p>Senator FAULKNER—What is the period of the consultancy? When did this mob kick off?</p> <p>Ms Clarke—I said 2005-06, but I am not aware that that is not the case. I will have to get further advice on the date.</p>	Answer received 29/1/07

QON No.	Department / agency	Senator	Hansard reference	Question	Comments
F16	DoFA	RAY	F&PA 34	<p>Senator ROBERT RAY—You say that you tried to do this in a timely manner. I am pleased about that. But on how many occasions did the department negotiating group either cancel or postpone meetings with the staff representative group after 28 August?</p> <p>Ms Mason—We would have to take it on notice and check.</p> <p>Senator ROBERT RAY—Did you? You did, didn't you—you just cannot remember when?</p> <p>Ms Mason—I am not sure. We will check. I do not have an awareness that we have cancelled meetings. If we did it would have been because we did not have the information to be able to discuss it with staff rather than because of any suggestion that we were attempting to delay the process. It is absolutely not the case.</p>	Answer received 29/1/07
F17	DoFA	FAULKNER	F&PA 41	<p>Senator FAULKNER—Did the Special Minister of State use materials that were developed by MAPS?</p> <p>Senator Colbeck—I will have to take that on notice. He had information there—</p>	Answer received 29/1/07
F18	DoFA	PARRY	F&PA 42	<p>Senator PARRY—Thank you, Chair. I have a question or two for Dr Watt and Ms Mason. I want to talk about the formula for calculating staff travel allowances—that is, for electorate staff—from their home base to Canberra. What is the basis of the calculation; how is that calculated and what is the formula used?</p> <p>Dr Watt—Mr Miles will answer the question for you, Senator.</p> <p>Mr Miles—I do not know if I have got the exact details here, but it is based on a certain number of trips to Canberra each year for each office. It has regard to the distance and the cost of individual airfares between Canberra and the electorate. It has regard to the distance between the electorate office and the airport for car and taxi costs. It has regard to the size of the electorate, because it factors in some intra-electorate travel as well. As for the actual number of trips per year that it uses in the calculation, I am not sure. I can take that on notice.</p>	Answer received 29/1/07

QON No.	Department / agency	Senator	Hansard reference	Question	Comments
F19	DoFA	PARRY	F&PA 42	<p>Senator PARRY—You touched on intrastate travel as well, because the budget allocation for each senator and member caters for travel not just to and from Canberra but also intrastate. You indicated that the size of each individual electorate is taken into account.</p> <p>Mr Miles—I believe so, but I would have to confirm that. I do not have those details.</p> <p>Senator PARRY—If you could also provide that on notice. Also, is the formula identical for members and senators, or is there a difference between them?</p> <p>Mr Miles—I believe it is identical, but again I can confirm that.</p>	Answer received 29/1/07
F20	DoFA	PARRY	F&PA 43	<p>Senator PARRY—You indicated that the intrastate and interstate travel for electorate staff is determined a little on geographical location and size of electorate—in particular the intrastate travel. I would like to know what the formula is. Is it five nights a year or 20 nights a year? What is that based upon when staff are away from the electorate base?</p> <p>Mr Miles—I understand. I will get that for you.</p>	Answer received 29/1/07
F21	DoFA	BOB BROWN	F&PA 43	<p>Senator BOB BROWN—Could you take on notice to inform the committee about the process of coming to that decision, if all parties were involved in that process and, if not, why not?</p> <p>Senator Colbeck—Certainly.</p>	Answer received 29/1/07
F22	DoFA	BOB BROWN	F&PA 43	<p>Ms Clarke—Generally the grant application—and I just talk in general terms; I do not have the Liberal Party's application with me—</p> <p>Senator BOB BROWN—Can I break in there. Can that be supplied to the committee, please?</p> <p>Ms Clarke—I will have to take that on notice.</p> <p>Senator BOB BROWN—And the Labor Party's application as well?</p> <p>Ms Clarke—I will take it on notice. I can talk in generalities about what the money should be used for. Is that what you are looking for?</p> <p>Senator BOB BROWN—No, I would like to specifically know what the allocated money is to be used for.</p>	Answer received 29/1/07

QON No.	Department / agency	Senator	Hansard reference	Question	Comments
F23	DoFA	RAY	F&PA 47	<p>Senator ROBERT RAY—It leads to the question: on how many of your documents does that statement appear?</p> <p>Ms Mason—I would need to take that on notice.</p>	Answer received 29/1/07
F24	DoFA	RAY	F&PA 48	<p>Senator ROBERT RAY—So, when you did that table for us, was there any science to the choice of dates, being 26 July 2000 and 5 April 2005?</p> <p>Ms Clarke—There was some science to that. There are obviously events that occurred in terms of when salary bands changed or when the performance review framework came into place, but I would have to take that on notice. I cannot answer accurately.</p> <p>Senator ROBERT RAY—Would it be possible, on notice, to have this table recalibrated as of April 2006? We have the 2005 figures. Is it possible to have the 2006 figures going back to April? Again, if you have a more convenient date, an obvious date, I will accept that.</p> <p>Ms Clarke—Yes, I will take that on notice. That can be done.</p>	Answer received 18/04/07
F25	DoFA	RAY	F&PA 49	<p>Mr Miles—I would have to add some figures together from here, I think.</p> <p>Senator ROBERT RAY—I think I can see the reason. It is the variation table, isn't it, that would tell us more than anything else? It is complex, Mr Miles, isn't it? I will leave you working on that. I asked in question F36 on notice about senior advisers. Can I ask you to take on notice the same question for media advisers? That covers all three categories listed here. That would be helpful.....</p> <p>Ms Clarke—I will have to get that information for you.</p> <p>Senator ROBERT RAY—You will not be able to put your hands on it right away?</p> <p>Ms Clarke—No. It will come.</p>	Answer received 29/1/07
F26	DoFA	RAY	F&PA 49	<p>Senator ROBERT RAY—We are coming to that—rely on us. If you could provide that on notice that would be useful. I do not want to know the individuals—and you would not tell me anyway—but just the classification so we can see whether there is a pattern of senior advisers or advisers being paid above the band. How many opposition staffers are being paid outside the salary band?</p>	Answer received 29/1/07

QON No.	Department / agency	Senator	Hansard reference	Question	Comments
F27	DoFA	RAY/FAULKNER	F&PA 50	<p>Senator ROBERT RAY—In regard to question F34, have there been any factors come into play that would alter your estimate of Mr Robb's staff costs, which, excluding electorate staff, are estimated to be \$780,712 a year? I notice that one senior adviser has been removed from his establishment. Does that downgrade those figures?</p> <p>Ms Mason—Presumably, it would, Senator. We do not have a more up-to-date total than that, if that is your question.</p> <p>Senator ROBERT RAY—I see.</p> <p>Senator FAULKNER—Perhaps you could take that on notice too?</p>	Answer received 29/1/07
F28	DoFA	FAULKNER	F&PA 52	<p>Senator FAULKNER—I know, but is 'vehicle' defined?</p> <p>Dr Watt—I think that is why we have to take it on notice.</p>	Answer received 29/1/07
F29	DoFA	RAY	F&PA 52-53	<p>Senator ROBERT RAY—It has the same status—it did not go over to the other one. Thank you. How much does it cost per year to list MPs' office telephone numbers in directories? Is half a million a year in the ballpark?</p> <p>Ms Mason—For listings?</p> <p>Senator ROBERT RAY—Yes.</p> <p>Ms Mason—I think we would need to take that on notice.</p>	Answer received 29/1/07
F30	DoFA	RAY	F&PA 53	<p>Senator ROBERT RAY—I just noticed my phone bill. The thing that prompted this is that you look at the average of your phone bill and suddenly in one month it jumped. When I rang and checked the reason for the jump, it was because they had billed my phone for advertised MPs' office telephones. So, firstly, I am questioning the cost of that and, secondly, I am asking why it is attributed to that telephone and whether it is properly attributed to that phone.</p> <p>Mr Miles—We would have to check on that.</p>	Answer received 29/1/07

QON No.	Department / agency	Senator	Hansard reference	Question	Comments
F31	DoFA	RAY	F&PA 55	<p>Senator ROBERT RAY—With regard to the new Telstra ADSL upgrade, could I ask: what extra costs were involved? I am referring to the minister's circular 05 of this year, 2006. Incidentally, I must commend—I am handing out a lot of elephant stamps today—the Special Minister of State for putting these things in writing so we can all understand them. They are quite clear and they are extremely helpful.</p> <p>Ms Mason—That is another one we will need to take on notice, in terms of the cost. Are you asking about the cost per installation or upgrade or the total cost?</p> <p>Senator ROBERT RAY—The total cost.</p> <p>Ms Mason—For the period since when?</p> <p>Senator ROBERT RAY—Since the ministerial announcement.</p>	Answer received 29/1/07
F32	DoFA	RAY	F&PA 55	<p>Senator Ray –My next question you might have to take on notice. In Mr Nairn's ministerial circular 06, which referred to the use of entitlements during the Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games, one aspect was that, because of the increased cost of accommodation during the games, there were special provisions made for staff when staying in Melbourne during that period that exceeded the standard overnight rate of travel allowance payable. I am sure you will have to take this on notice: how many staff put in accommodation claims that were above the standard overnight rate of travel allowance? Could you take that one on notice?</p> <p>Ms Mason—Yes.</p>	Answer received 29/1/07
F33	DoFA	RAY	F&PA 55	<p>Senator ROBERT RAY—Again, you might need to take this on notice: how many members and senators have taken up this alternative?</p> <p>Ms Mason—I will take that on notice.</p> <p>Senator ROBERT RAY—Could you also take on notice whether there is any restriction on office holders who are entitled to a Comcar in their home state accessing this new entitlement. Do you understand the question? You are entitled to an electorate car and in some cases you are entitled to a Comcar. I want to know whether anyone has dispensed with the electorate car, substituted a Comcar and pocketed the \$19,500—though I very much doubt that that has happened.</p>	Answer received 29/1/07

QON No.	Department / agency	Senator	Hansard reference	Question	Comments
F34	DoFA	RAY	F&PA 57	<p>Senator ROBERT RAY—Let me slip one question in down the middle and we will come back to him. I notice that in ministerial circular No. 11 members and senators are reminded of the 60-day rule for the lodgement of travel allowance claims. How many times this calendar year has the minister granted an extension of time because of exceptional circumstances?</p> <p>Mr Miles—We would have to check that.</p> <p>Senator ROBERT RAY—I am not asking who, by the way; I am asking how many times he has had to do it.</p> <p>Mr Miles—This financial year?</p> <p>Senator ROBERT RAY—I do not know how you keep your records. I know you will not manipulate the records to give me the answer, so I leave the convenient date to you, generally—what is easiest to retrieve. You know that if I were to catch you manipulating the dates it would not be worth it.</p>	Answer received 29/1/07
F35	DoFA	FAULKNER	F&PA 64	<p>Senator FAULKNER—Then do not answer it. Just answer that part of my question which goes to when you became aware of the briefing of the staff member of the Special Minister of State. Was it before or after the briefing? That is all I was asking. You have said you were aware of it; I am asking when.</p> <p>Ms Mason—I think that we would need to check, because I cannot recall whether we knew about it before or afterwards. We certainly knew about the ALP briefing, because we were invited to attend.</p>	Answer received 10/04/07
F36	DoFA	RAY	F&PA 65	<p>Senator ROBERT RAY—If each member of the House of Reps this year carried over 45 per cent from the previous year, am I right in saying they would have a total of \$32,625,000 to spend, potentially?</p> <p>Ms Clarke—I have not done the maths, I am sorry.</p> <p>Senator ROBERT RAY—You might take that on notice—</p>	Answer received 29/1/07

QON No.	Department / agency	Senator	Hansard reference	Question	Comments
F37	DoFA	RAY	F&PA 66	<p>Senator ROBERT RAY—In relation to the networking of the electorate office photocopiers, I think you are networking the photocopiers to the computers. You have done a trial period. Could I be informed which electorate offices were used in the trial period.</p> <p>Mr Staun—Certainly.</p> <p>Senator ROBERT RAY—While you are looking that up, I will ask two more questions that we can get the answers to later. I would like to know who would determine the priority of the progressive connection of all electorate offices to the IT network. And could we be provided with a list of who has been connected so far and the details of what the costs are anticipated to be. Perhaps you can take those on notice.</p> <p>Senator Colbeck—Is that in relation to the photocopiers? Is that what you are talking about?</p> <p>Senator ROBERT RAY—Yes. This is a linking of the IT network to the photocopiers.</p> <p>Senator Colbeck—Okay.</p> <p>Senator ROBERT RAY—You understand the implications, don't you?</p> <p>Senator Colbeck—I do.</p> <p>Senator ROBERT RAY—Would you like to explain them to me? I know you cannot put them in layman's terms so—</p> <p>Senator Colbeck—Quite simply, it is just connecting the photocopier to the computer system so you can print directly to the photocopier rather than to a printer.</p> <p>Senator ROBERT RAY—Which will save costs long term, I would have thought.</p> <p>Senator Colbeck—And time.</p> <p>Senator ROBERT RAY—Yes. Anyway, could we find out who was used in the trial, who has been connected so far, what the priority list is and what the anticipated costs is.</p> <p>Mr Staun—Yes.</p> <p>Senator ROBERT RAY—Has a decision been made to award a second electorate office to electorates larger than 30,000 square kilometres?</p> <p>Ms Clarke—That is correct.</p> <p>Senator ROBERT RAY—What is the costing of that? You might have to take this on notice, but how many electorates are concerned?</p> <p>Ms Clarke—That I can tell you; the costing we will have to take on notice.</p>	Answer received 29/1/07

QON No.	Department / agency	Senator	Hansard reference	Question	Comments
F38	DoFA	RAY	F&PA 66	<p>Senator ROBERT RAY—Has a decision been made to award a second electorate office to electorates larger than 30,000 square kilometres?</p> <p>Ms Clarke—That is correct.</p> <p>Senator ROBERT RAY—What is the costing of that? You might have to take this on notice, but how many electorates are concerned?</p>	Answer received 29/1/07
F39	DoFA	RAY	F&PA 67	<p>Senator ROBERT RAY—Liberal Party. Gee, we've done well to get two out of that! Thanks for that. What I am asking on notice is what the annualised cost of the extra electorate office will be in each case, including, as I understand it, a fourth staff member. However, to set out the figures fairly, could I have an annualised cost, with the set-up cost separated out. It would be unfair to include the set-up cost in the annualised cost. Do you understand what I mean, Parliamentary Secretary? We need the set-up cost first—they will not be repeated—and then the annualised cost of this particular initiative.</p>	Answer received 29/1/07
F40	DoFA	RAY	F&PA 69	<p>Senator ROBERT RAY—Surely it applies to chairs of all parliamentary committees?</p> <p>Ms Clarke—Yes, I need to take that on notice. The idea is that the Special Minister of State writes to the chairs, but I will check out which chairs.</p>	Answer received 29/1/07
F41	DoFA	RAY	F&PA 69	<p>Senator ROBERT RAY—In relation to travel allowance paid to members of parliament, has any travel allowance had to be repaid on the basis that proper receipts for a commercial accommodation were not provided or a satisfactory explanation was not given?</p> <p>Ms Hughes—As part of our regular audit of payments, we test whether accommodation receipts have been provided. We have had some cases where they have not, and I would have to take on notice the outcome of those. I think in most cases we have received either a stat dec or some evidence that they were available on request as required.</p>	Answer received 29/1/07

QON No.	Department / agency	Senator	Hansard reference	Question	Comments
F42	DoFA	RAY	F&PA 70	<p>Senator ROBERT RAY—In other words, there is an alternative method if people have lost their receipts to put in a stat dec asserting they were at a commercial accommodation. In terms of the newspaper, periodical and publications allowance, is any audit ever done as to the nature of what you are able to order in? I assume things like <i>Inside Cricket</i> and <i>Best Bets</i> are not recommended reading on this allowance.</p> <p>Mr Miles—I am not aware of any systematic audit. I am not aware of the amount of detail we get in all cases from newsagents in respect of those accounts, but I can check for you.</p>	Answer received 29/1/07
F43	DoFA	FAULKNER/RAY	F&PA 71	<p>Senator ROBERT RAY—You might take that on notice: whether the Prime Minister—</p> <p>Senator FAULKNER—I would be absolutely certain—</p> <p>Senator ROBERT RAY—is flying the flag.</p> <p>Senator FAULKNER—And it would be done at Mr Nelson's electorate office. We could be absolutely certain of that, couldn't we? And there are all those other people who make these outlandish demands on everybody else but do not do it themselves.</p>	Answer received 29/1/07
F44	DoFA	RAY	F&PA 75	<p>Senator ROBERT RAY—That is smart. How many senators and members have availed themselves of the opportunity to be provided with a new Telecard?</p> <p>Mr Miles—We would have to find out.</p>	Answer received 29/1/07
F45	DoFA	FAULKNER	F&PA 81	<p>Senator FAULKNER—Can you tell me when the ministerial office was opened?</p> <p>Mr Miles—No, I cannot.</p> <p>Senator FAULKNER—Can you take that on notice for me, please.</p> <p>Mr Miles—We will be able to tell you when it was available for occupation. We have no involvement of course in its opening.</p>	Answer received 29/1/07

QON No.	Department / agency	Senator	Hansard reference	Question	Comments
F46	DoFA	FAULKNER	F&PA 81	<p>Senator FAULKNER—Can you take on notice the rent, if you do not have that available, and the cost of fit-out? I would appreciate a disaggregated fit-out cost. What other ongoing costs are you responsible for paying for this grand ministerial office in Dubbo?</p> <p>Mr Miles—I run the risk of misinforming you if I try to go through all the costs that we meet as opposed to the home department—</p> <p>Senator FAULKNER—Can you take on notice and supply to me, please, those costs for this office that are met by DOFA. Is that a simple way of asking the question, which means that we can make sure that we cover all bases?</p>	Answer received 29/1/07
F47	DoFA	FAULKNER	F&PA 81	<p>Senator FAULKNER—.....Are you able to tell me in relation to the minister's ministerial staff how many have Dubbo as a home base?</p> <p>Mr Miles—I do not have the information here, Senator.</p> <p>Senator FAULKNER—Could you take that on notice, please. Could you also take on notice the salary classification or band classification of those staff? Are there any special guidelines that apply to the establishment of ministerial offices outside capital cities?</p>	Answer received 29/1/07
F48	DoFA	FAULKNER	F&PA 81	<p>Senator FAULKNER—How many ministerial offices currently are outside a state or territory capital city?</p> <p>Mr Miles—We would have to take that on notice.</p> <p>Senator FAULKNER—I would appreciate that information, if you could provide it for me. I would like you to double-check for me whether there are any specific guidelines or any guidance at all that relates to such an establishment outside a capital city. I suspect there is not any, but you can let me know if that is the case. I think that you have taken on notice for me a list of those other ministerial offices that are outside capital cities.....</p>	Answer received 29/1/07
F49	DoFA	FAULKNER	F&PA 82	<p>Senator FAULKNER—Can you also take on notice the size of the electorate office at 3/153 Brisbane St, Dubbo?</p> <p>Mr Miles—Yes.</p>	Answer received 29/1/07
F50	DoFA	SHERRY	F&PA 86	<p>Senator SHERRY—You can take this on notice. Can you give me a breakdown by group of the retention rates over the last three years? It is not in the detail of the annual report.</p>	Answer received 18/1/07

QON No.	Department / agency	Senator	Hansard reference	Question	Comments
F51	DoFA	SHERRY	F&PA 89	<p>Senator SHERRY—Could you—take this on notice—provide me with a list of the grants and amounts by portfolio entered into that register in the 2005-06 financial year. The processes and computer programs that are employed for the register: does it identify that there is no double-dipping, as I would describe it, on grants?</p>	Answer received 18/1/07
F52	DoFA	SHERRY	F&PA 94	<p>Senator Minchin—My current position is that that should not be released because it is obviously material to the government's decision. The big issue for the government in considering these issues is the cost to government and, therefore, the taxpayers of change in this area. You would appreciate better than most that it is potentially very costly. Therefore, that information is material to the government's decision making process. I doubt that that would be assisted by those numbers being in the public arena prior to any decision. I am happy to reflect on it and consider your not unreasonable request but I do think, given the general position we adopt on matters that are live issues before the government with respect to the release of information, that it falls into that category. But I will reflect further on it.</p> <p>Senator SHERRY—I hope you do, Minister, because I do not think it is unreasonable, given there is a concluded report paid for by taxpayers some months ago with matters of fact as established by those actuaries. I do not think that is unreasonable.</p>	Answer received 18/1/07
F53	DoFA	Sherry	F&PA 94	<p>Senator SHERRY—Before we get to all privatisations, let's stick with Qantas for the moment. Was it not a part of the sale of Qantas that very similar provisions were included in the Qantas trust deed at that time that reflected their existing superannuation promise? That was determined, negotiated and discussed at the same time as the privatisation of Qantas.</p> <p>Ms Campbell—It is my understanding that it was a decision by Qantas as to what superannuation arrangements they would make for the employees post the sale.</p> <p>Senator SHERRY—That is not what I asked. Was that decision not taken at the same time and as part of the discussions and negotiations in the sale process?</p> <p>Mr Lewis—We would need to check that.</p>	Answer received 18/1/07

QON No.	Department / agency	Senator	Hansard reference	Question	Comments
F54	DoFA	Sherry	F&PA 96	<p>Senator SHERRY—Can that legal advice be made available to me?</p> <p>Ms Campbell—Can I take that on notice?</p> <p>Dr Watt—We normally do not provide legal advice. We are happy to provide you with a sense of it, though.</p>	Answer received 18/1/07
F55	DoFA	SHERRY	F&PA 97	<p>Senator SHERRY—Was an actuarial report prepared by Mercers presented to the department on this matter?</p> <p>Dr Watt—I do not know whether there was ever a formal report prepared, but they fed into material that was sent to cabinet. Regardless of whether there was actually a formal report with everything in it, they did a series—</p> <p>Senator SHERRY—But there was a document of some sort.</p> <p>Dr Watt—of calculations for us. That is the best way I can put it. There may have been something more formal. I cannot remember.</p> <p>Senator SHERRY—If you could take it on notice to provide us with that document.....</p>	Answer received 18/1/07
F56	DoFA	SHERRY	F&PA 100	<p>Senator SHERRY—Are there any contracts that have been signed recently in addition to the contracts on this list?</p> <p>Mr Lewis—I will check that. If there were, they would not be substantial. I would be happy to take that on notice and report back to you.</p>	Answer received 18/1/07
F57	DoFA	MINCHIN	F&PA 100	<p>Senator SHERRY—Who are the companies and the approximate applications?</p> <p>Mr Lewis—The government's placements—</p> <p>Senator Minchin—Which outlets? Which media?</p> <p>Mr Lewis—We would need to take that on notice.</p> <p>Senator Minchin—We can get you that.</p>	Answer received 18/1/07

QON No.	Department / agency	Senator	Hansard reference	Question	Comments
F58	DoFA	SHERRY	F&PA 107	<p>Senator SHERRY—I am not sure that \$500,000 plus a possible bonus of up to 60 per cent is not the highest.</p> <p>Senator Minchin—Sure. It depends whether you assume all of that bonus is going to be paid. All I am happy to say is that is certainly not the highest level of remuneration.</p> <p>Senator SHERRY—Would you take that on notice and give us a comparison?</p> <p>Minchin—Yes, sure.</p>	Answer received 18/1/07
F59	DoFA	EVANS	Written	Attached	Answer received 29/1/07
F60	DoFA	EVANS	Written	Attached	Answer received 18/1/07
F61	DoFA	CARR	Written	Attached	Answer received 29/1/07
F62	AEC	NASH	Written	Attached	Answer received 2/02/07
F63	AEC	NASH	Written	Attached	Answer received 2/02/07
F64	AEC	MURRAY	Written	Attached	Answer received 10/04/07
F65	AEC	FAULKNER	Written	Attached	Answer received 2/02/07
F66	AEC	FAULKNER	Written	Attached	Answer received 2/02/07
F67	DoFA	O'BRIEN	Written	Attached	Answer received 9/02/07
F68	DoFA	CROSSIN/LUDWIG	Written	Attached	Answer received 7/02/07
F69	DoFA	LUDWIG	Written	Attached	Answer received 9/02/07
F70	AEC	LUDWIG	Written	Attached	Answer received 9/02/07
F71	CGC	LUDWIG	Written	Attached	Answer received 9/02/07
F72	FFMA	LUDWIG	Written	Attached	Answer received 9/02/07
F73	ComSuper	LUDWIG	Written	Attached	Answer received 9/02/07

QON No.	Department / agency	Senator	Hansard reference	Question	Comments
F74	ARIA	LUDWIG	Written	Attached	Answer received 9/02/07
F75	DoFA	LUDWIG	Written	Attached	Answer received 10/04/07
F76	AEC	LUDWIG	Written	Attached	Answer received 10/04/07
F77	CGC	LUDWIG	Written	Attached	Answer received 10/04/07
F78	FFMA	LUDWIG	Written	Attached	Answer received 10/04/07
F79	ComSuper	LUDWIG	Written	Attached	Answer received 10/04/07
F80	ARIA	LUDWIG	Written	Attached	Answer received 10/04/07
F81	DoFA	LUDWIG	Written	Attached	Answer received 21/03/07
F82	AEC	LUDWIG	Written	Attached	Answer received 21/03/07
F83	CGC	LUDWIG	Written	Attached	Answer received 21/03/07
F84	FFMA	LUDWIG	Written	Attached	Answer received 21/03/07
F85	ComSuper	LUDWIG	Written	Attached	Answer received 21/03/07
F86	ARIA	LUDWIG	Written	Attached	Answer received 21/03/07
F87	DoFA	EVANS	Written	Attached	Transferred from FACSIA Answer received 18/1/07

QON No.	Department / agency	Senator	Hansard reference	Question	Comments
F88	DoFA	SHERRY	F&PA 86	<p>Mr Bowen—There are very concerning aspects in the report. We took the decision that we would not keep the report secret or hide it. Yes, it is for internal purposes, and it says that on the front of the report, but you might also know—I do not know whether you have a copy of the letter that I and my executive team signed—</p> <p>Senator SHERRY—You will be pleased to know that I do not have that.</p> <p>Mr Bowen—You can have it; I do not mind at all.</p> <p>Senator SHERRY—Thank you.</p>	Answer received 18/1/07

Please note that answers F1 – F68 are due by 15 December 2006.
Answers F69 – F86 are due by 31 January 2007.

Written QON

F 59

1. Provide a list of the consultancies under the MOPS Act held by Geoffrey Cousins since 1996. For each consultancy:
 - a. provide the total amount paid to Mr Cousins;

- b. indicate the start and end date;
 - c. indicate the nature and scope of the work undertaken;
 - d. the nature of the remuneration, e.g. daily fee, set amount, annual salary;
 - e. Whether the consultancy was put out to public tender or competitive bid.
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F 60

1. Please indicate the total cost to the Australian Government of the hosting of APEC 2007. Please also provide a breakdown of the Commonwealth or State departments, agencies or other bodies which are funded for APEC 2007 and the level of funding to each of these organisations.
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F 61

1. Please provide a table indicating, for each block of land or property held by agencies other than Defence and that has been identified as surplus, is being sold or is forecast for disposal:
 - a) location;
 - b) size of block(s);
 - c) current zoning of land/property and surrounding blocks(s);
 - d) proposed timeframe for disposal.
 2. For land or property where disposal is currently underway, please provide:
 - a) the current status of the disposal; and
 - b) the intended use of the land or property, if known.
-

F 62

Are elected independent members of parliament entitled to act together in the following ways without being considered a political party?

- a. co-ordination of policies and parliamentary strategy
- b. fundraising
- c. exchange of advice, and mentorship "to encourage independent candidates around Australia to take the giant step of running for state or federal parliament."
- d. Exchange of resources
- e. Pooling of resources – to fund aircraft / vehicle leasing
- f. joint conferences

If a fundraising activity was held by a group of like-minded **declared** independent candidates or a body associated with independent members of parliament would there be a disclosure obligation under terms of the commonwealth electoral act?

Has the AEC initiated formal investigation of the Independent Candidate Advisory Network (ICAN) activities including fundraising to test the organisation's validity or otherwise under the commonwealth electoral act? If not, why not?

Has the AEC formed a determination of the political status of ICAN? If so, what is it? If not, given that you have been aware of ICAN's existence since February this year and have aided there activities, why have you not formed a determination?

I'd like to draw your attention to an article of 12 October 2006 by the independent member for Calare that appears Mr Andren's website. I quote from the article.

*Former Telstra Country Wide manager Gavin Priestley, who lives in Orange and has a wool property at Hargraves in the Parkes electorate, is also coordinator of the Independent Candidate Advisory Network (ICAN). He'll be flying his plane around the new electorates over the next few months meeting the many people who've contacted ICAN wanting to help independent candidates. **When we do make decisions on who runs where early next year, there will be a network of helpers in place to maximise our chances.***

The tenor of this quote "**when we do make decisions on who runs where early next year**" suggests that ICAN will in fact be endorsing candidates, in a very similar manner to that of a registered political party. I respectfully request that the AEC look into this matter and report its findings to the committee.

F 63

On the QLD and NSW redistributions.

You appear to have placed high importance on the equality of numbers when determining the QLD redistribution? Doesn't the commonwealth electoral act at 66(3)(a) allow for a 'projection time' tolerance of plus or minus 3.5 per cent of the number of electors when considering a redistribution? Why then did you decide to place such a high importance on the equality of numbers?

How did you consider the community of interest (economic, social and regional) for the new electorate of Flynn and also for the existing electorate of Farrer?

In your draft determination you make reference to the history and heritage linkages of Gladstone with western Queensland.

- o Could you explain to the committee those history and heritage factors that assisted your final determination.

Does the act require an electorate to have a coastal link with an inland region (eg Gladstone with Emerald)?

What was the Commission's thinking when considering the community of interest in linking Cameron's Corner (the geographic point that links QLD, NSW and SA state borders) to Albury in the seat of Farrer as opposed to say Broken Hill in the new seat of Calare?

In your NSW redistribution deliberations did you put any weight on the heritage / Federation value of the retaining the name Gwydir?

F 64

With respect to the recent changes to the CEA concerning the registration of political parties, please provide a progress report on the following parties and their registration or re-registration status.

Christian Democratic Party (Fred Nile Group);
Citizens Electoral Council of Australia;
Citizens Electoral Council Australia (NSW Division);
Help End Marijuana Prohibition;
Hope Party Australia – ethics equality ecology;
liberals for forests;
New Country Party;
No Goods and Services Tax Party;
Non-Custodial Parents Party;
People Power;
Progressive Labour Party;
Republican Party of Australia;
Socialist Alliance;
The Australian Shooters Party;
The Fishing Party;
The Great Australians.:

Nuclear Disarmament Party of Australia
And any other political parties whose registration status may not be automatically renewed.

F 65

1. Could the AEC outline where the development of the public awareness campaign is set up to as a result of the Government's legislation having passed the parliament?
2. Can the AEC provide specific details as to how they plan to spend the additional funds provided?
3. Can the AEC provide details on enrolment activity on an electorate basis at the last election for the period following the calling of the election up to the close of the rolls?

F 66

1. Has the AEC been able to advance the implementation of the electronic voting trial?
2. What will take place at the next election?

F 67

With reference to the Department of Finance and Administration fleet purchasing and leasing policy:

1. Is the Department aware of a 'high impact action' identified in the Australian Transport Council's *National Road Safety Plan 2007 and 2008* being:

Governments to implement vehicle fleet purchasing policies that have high regard to vehicle safety standards for both occupants and pedestrians, and that promote uptake in the general fleet of effective advanced safety features such as Electronic Stability Control.
2. Has the Department been approached by the Minister for Transport and Regional Services or the Minister for Roads regarding the implementation of this 'high impact action'?
 - a. If yes,
What actions has the Department implemented to meet this 'high impact action'?
3. Does the Department specify any active or passive safety features when selecting vehicles to be included on the List of Eligible General Fleet (Passenger) Vehicles?
 - a. If yes, please detail.
 - b. If no, does the Department have plans to specify any of these features?
4. Is consideration given by the Department to the Australian New Car Assessment Program (ANCAP) ratings when selecting vehicles to be included on the List of Eligible General Fleet (Passenger) Vehicles?
 - a. If yes, please detail.
 - b. If not, why not?

5. Has the Department developed a model vehicle procurement and fleet management policy for use within all Commonwealth departments and agencies?
 - a. If yes, can you provide a copy of this?
 - b. If no, does the Department have plans to develop a model vehicle procurement and fleet management plan?
 - i. If not, why not?
6. Has the Department consulted with the Commonwealth Department with the primary responsibility for road and vehicle safety, the Department of Transport and Regional Services regarding road and vehicle safety issues?
 - a. If yes, can you provide details of any consultations?
 - i. If no, why not?

F68

I understand that the Departmental and Agency Contracts Listings for period 1 July to 30 June 2006 shows total contractor amounts listed is more than \$231m for Christmas Island Immigration Processing Centre. Is that correct?

What was the original amount allocated for the Christmas Island Processing Centre and what is the current total projected overspend on the project and the projected completion date?

Is the current contract held by 'Architectural services' by Philips Smith Conwell Architects? Who and how much was the original tender?

Is the amount now expected to be almost \$13m overspend?

Was Boulderstone Hornibrook contracts totalling \$209.6m. What was the original tender?

Questions to all departments/agencies

F69-F74

With regard to each agencies (and the department itself) that fall inside the department's portfolio, could the department indicate

1. What date the agency's 2005-06 Annual Report was tabled before parliament?
2. If the annual report was not tabled by 31 October 2006, could the department indicate:
 - a. When the report was tabled, or if it remains untabled what date the report is expected to be tabled by.
 - b. Whether the agency's own legislation provides an alternative timeframe for its annual report. If so, could the department provide:
 - i. A description and reference to the relevant provision and legislation.

- ii. An explanation of why the agency cannot meet the general timeframe set out in the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet's Requirements for Annual Reports, and so requires an alternative timeframe?
- c. Whether the agency was granted an extension under section subsections 34C(4) - (7) of the *Acts Interpretation Act 1901*? If so, could the department provide:
 - i. The date for finalizing the report as set out in the extension.
 - ii. The reason given for granting the extension.
 - iii. The date that the Minister tabled in Parliament a statement explaining why an extension was granted.
 - iv. A copy of the Minister's statement.
- d. Where the agency's legislation doesn't provide for an alternative timeframe (as per question b) nor was the agency granted an extension (as per question c) could the department provide:
 - i. Explanation for why the Annual Report was tabled outside the timeframe set by DPM&C despite there being no provision alternative timeframe set out in the agency's legislation nor there being any formal extension granted.

Details of any other arrangement in place for the tabling of the agency's Annual Report.

F75 – F80

With regard to the preparation of Possible Parliament Questions briefs or other such documents intended to brief Minister's on an issue specifically for Question Time, could the department/agency provide:

1. The number of such briefs prepared in each of the last three financial years (2003-04, 2004-05, 2005-06).
2. The number of staff who are responsible for coordinating such briefs and the salary level they are engaged at.
3. The name of internal unit/team that those staff belong to and a description of its other responsibilities.
4. The total budget associated with the unit/team referred to in response to part 3.

F81 – F86

- (1) What sum did the department spend during 2005-2006 on external
 - (a) barristers and
 - (b) solicitors (including private firms, the Australian Government Solicitor and any others).
 - (2) What sum did the department spend on internal legal services.
 - (3) What is the department's projected expenditure on legal services for 2006-2007.
-

F87

Regarding the Family Violence Regional Activities Program and the Family Violence Partnerships Program evaluations:

When is the OEA evaluation due to report and will it be made public?