

Finance and Public Administration Legislative Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Australian Public Service Commission

Estimates 2006-07 – Supplementary Budget Estimates, October 2006

Question: PM 54-61

Topic: Annual Report

Senator Ludwig asked:

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.

Answer:

The Australian Public Service Commission tabled its 2005-06 Annual Report on 18 October 2006.

Section 44 of the *Public Service Act 1999* requires that the Public Service Commissioner also prepare an annual report to Parliament that includes a report on the state of the Australian Public Service (APS), in accordance with guidelines approved on behalf of Parliament by the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit. This requirement is met by the State of the Service Report (SOSR), which was tabled on 30 November 2006.

The Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit (JCPAA) agreed in 2003 to extend the tabling deadline for all state of the service reports to one calendar month after the tabling date for agencies' annual reports. This is in recognition that a key source of data for the SOSR is a survey of all APS agencies that employ at least 20 employees under the Public Service Act, which closes in mid to late July in order to cover a complete financial year. Survey results are not available until the end of August to early September. This timeline makes it extremely difficult to meet the 31 October tabling deadline for the report, prompting the JCPAA to grant an extension to 30 November.