

Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration

ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Finance and Deregulation Portfolio

Department of Finance and Deregulation

Supplementary Estimates Hearing – October 2010

Outcome General, Program General

Topic: Election Commitments

Question reference number: F33

Type of Question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 3 December 2010

Number of Pages: 1

Senator Bernardi asked:

- a) What is the status of each election commitment from the 2007 election within the portfolio?
- b) Which 2007 election commitments are experiencing slippages? Why? Where relevant, what are the revised implementation dates? What are the implications of this slippage?
- c) Are there any 2007 election commitments that will not be implemented? If yes, please provide details. Were departmental resources provided to implement these commitments? How much? What will happen to the funding now?

Answer:

a)&b) Refer to Attachment A.

c) No.

STATUS OF FINANCE AND DEREGULATION PORTFOLIO 2007 ELECTION COMMITMENTS

ELECTION COMMITMENT	STATUS
Government advertising campaigns over \$250,000 to be scrutinised by the Auditor General.	Delivered.
Establishment of the Building Australia Fund.	Delivered.
Cut the printing allowance for Members of the House of Representatives by \$50,000 per annum and Senators by \$3,333 per annum.	Delivered.
Review public/private partnership policy.	Delivered.
Application of a one-off efficiency dividend of 2 per cent.	Delivered.
Reduce government expenditure on consultants by 25 per cent.	Delivered.
Whole-of-government procurements – tender processes for centralised supply contracts.	Delivered.
Operation Sunlight – a suite of measures to enhance budget transparency.	Delivered.
Reduce spending on media monitoring by \$4m per year.	Delivered.
Reversal of sale of Medibank Private.	Delivered.
Comprehensive review of Australian Government expenditure – savings options for the 2008-09 Budget.	Delivered.
Comprehensive review of Australian Government expenditure – Australian Government Programs.	Delivered.
Revamp the Commonwealth Property Disposals policy to expedite the release of surplus Commonwealth land that is assessed as suitable for advancing housing and/or community outcomes.	Delivered.
Improved value for money for Commonwealth travel.	Delivered.
Absorbing the cost of the Future Fund Advisory Unit.	Delivered.
Reduce the number of Ministerial and Opposition staff by 30 per cent.	Delivered in the 2008-09 Budget. To cope with increased parliamentary workloads, a subsequent measure providing an increase in government and opposition staff numbers was announced in the 2009-10 Budget in response to recommendations from an independent review conducted by Mr Alan Henderson PSM. Further to this, the 2010-11 MYEFO included a measure to increase the number of ministerial, opposition, Australian Greens, independent members and whips staff to allow Members and Senators to better manage their workload and provide them with greater capacity for consultation.
Within five years of coming to office, set a national objective in partnership with the States and Territories to harmonise key regulation.	Delivered.

ELECTION COMMITMENT	STATUS
<p>imposed on businesses operating across jurisdictions, including OH&S regulation, building codes, and trades and professional body recognition. Provide financial incentive to reward State and Territory Governments that implement these reforms.</p>	
<p>Use Regulation Impact Statements and establish a Federal Government Small Business Advisory Council to review and comment on the RIS, with their comments included in the RIS.</p>	<p>Delivered.</p>
<p>Adopt a "One in, one-out" principle so that when new regulations are proposed, they must be accompanied by proposals to remove regulations and where possible, implement a common commencement date for new regulation.</p>	<p>Delivered.</p>
<p>Amend Commonwealth electoral legislation to restore the seven day period for the close of rolls during an election and repeal the requirement for provisional voters to provide evidence of identity.</p>	<p>The relevant amendments were initially introduced into the House of Representatives in the Electoral and Referendum Amendment (Close of Rolls and Other Measures) Bill 2010 on 11 February 2010. This Bill did not proceed and the provisions were reintroduced on 2 June 2010 in the Electoral and Referendum Amendment (Close of Rolls and Other Measures) Bill (No. 2) 2010. This legislation lapsed with the dissolution of the House of Representatives and the prorogation of the Parliament for the 2010 Federal Election.</p> <p>On 6 August 2010, the High Court of Australia determined that the close of rolls provisions, introduced in 2006, were constitutionally invalid (<i>Rowe v Electoral Commissioner</i>). This had the legal effect of restoring the close of rolls period to seven days after the issue of the writ for an election. On 24 November 2010, the Electoral and Referendum Amendment (Enrolment and Prisoner Voting) Bill 2010 was introduced into the House of Representatives. This Bill includes provisions to implement the High Court's decision on the close of rolls period.</p> <p>The Government remains committed to the removal of the proof of identity requirement for provisional voters. Introduction of relevant legislation is being considered by the Government.</p>