

Senate Finance and Public Administration Standing Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES 2010-2011
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Department/Agency: Australian Public Service Commission

Outcome/Output Group: 1.1

Topic: FOI Requests

Senator: Abetz

Question reference number: PM 123

- a) Has the Department/agency received any advice from the Government or any other source on how to respond to FOI requests?
- b) How many FOI requests has the Department received?
- c) How many have been granted or denied?
- d) How many conclusive certificates have been issued in relation to FOI requests?
- e) Has the Department/agency received any FOI requests for its Incoming Government Brief ('Red Book')? If yes, when and will it be released?
- f) Has the Department/agency received any FOI requests for its Incoming Government Brief ('Blue Book')? If yes, when and will it be released?

Type of question: Written

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

Number of pages: Two

Answer:

- a) Since June 2010, the Commission received the following advice on how to respond to FOI requests:
 - A range of new advice has been provided in respect of the new FOI Act requirements which took effect on 1 November 2010; sources include the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC), the Australian Government Solicitor, private sector law firms;
 - Guidelines on the operation of the FOI Act as it was before 1 November 2010 are available on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet website;
 - The Commission subscribes to the FOI practitioners' network which regularly publishes up-to-date advice on FOI matters and conducts information seminars;
 - Draft guidance on the FOI Act as it applies after 1 November has been made available through the Govdex website by the OAIC;
 - Commission employees utilise training materials published by the Australian Government Solicitor; and
 - The Commission has from time to time obtained legal advice in relation to individual FOI requests

- b) Since June 2010 the Commission received 2 FOI requests.
- c) These requests were granted in part.
- d) No conclusive certificates were issued in respect of FOI requests to the Commission.
- e) No
- f) No