

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES 2011-2012

Finance and Deregulation Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of Finance and Deregulation

Outcome/Program: General

Topic: Freedom of Information

Senator: Cormann

Question reference number: F19

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: Friday, 2 December 2011

Number of pages: 1

Question:

I would be very grateful for anything on notice that you could tell me on the costs [of accessibility], to the extent that you track them, of this new process and on any efforts to streamline and to make the process more efficient.

Answer:

The FOI policy requires agencies to publish details of information they release under FOI in a Disclosure Log on their website. They are not required to post the actual documents and are not required to make them accessible if they choose not to post them to the web.

As detailed in the Australian Government's Web Accessibility National Transition Strategy (NTS), in order to comply with the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*, documents published online must be made accessible. Publishing legacy information can be a resource intensive activity (where the documents are not originally electronic and need to be scanned and made readable). However, it is necessary to provide equal access to all people. Where done correctly from the outset, costs to make information accessible should be minimal. Details of the requirements for accessibility are provided in the Australian Human Rights Commission's *World Wide Web Access: Disability Discrimination Act Advisory Notes Version 4.0*.

As the NTS progresses, between now and December 2014, the need to convert documents will reduce as they will increasingly be produced and maintained in accessible electronic formats.

The Department of Finance and Deregulation does not monitor agencies' costs at this level.