

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS  
AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT SOLICITOR

**Question No. 85**

**Senator Ludwig asked the following question at the hearing on 24 May 2007:**

- a) What are the range of lengths of contracts that AGS typically engages in with its clients?
- b) What proportion of contracts might be characterised as repeat work?

**The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:**

- a) The term of the contracts that AGS enters into with respect to the legal services panels of Australian Government departments and agencies, is typically three years, often with an option to extend the term of the contract. AGS also enters into contracts for specific projects or matters which can range from a few months to a few years, depending on the nature of the project or matter.
- b) The amount of work that AGS receives under legal services panel contracts is subject to the differing arrangements that departments and agencies have in place for allocating work to their legal service providers. It is not uncommon for a department or agency to ask AGS and the other legal providers on its panel to submit tenders to undertake specific legal work under its panel arrangements. Also, the nature and blend of legal services that AGS provides to a client (litigation, commercial, statutory interpretation, administrative law etc) vary over time according to the client's policy and administrative priorities and its views on the relative merits of AGS and other law firms. In these circumstances, it is not possible to determine, in any meaningful way, the proportion of work that AGS does under contract that might be characterised as repeat work.

AGS does carry out tied work (associated with the Constitution, Cabinet matters, national security and public international law) which the Government has determined should be performed by AGS and specified government lawyers. This category of work, which might be regarded as repeat work, represents a relatively small proportion of AGS's legal services.