

**SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**Inquiry into the DEEWR Tender Process to award employment services contracts**

**EEWR\_SIH\_W25**

Senator Siewert provided in writing.

**Question**

Did DEEWR investigate contracting out the tender process?

**Answer**

The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations has both extensive experience in employment services purchasing and expertise in the conduct of complex, high value procurement exercises.

Over many years, the Department has also invested heavily in sophisticated training and assessment processes, as well as IT and other tools, to support the effective and efficient management of the steps in the purchasing process. In addition, quality assurance is an integral part of the Department's approach to tender evaluation.

In each major employment services procurement which it has conducted, the Department has received an unqualified sign-off from the independent Probity Advisers.

In its final probity report on the *Request for Tender for Employment Services 2009-12*, Clayton Utz observed that the conduct of the Employment Services procurement Process represented a high benchmark for the conduct of Commonwealth procurements in that the Department not only met, but in many cases exceeded relevant probity principles and standards. The report also noted that the Department established and maintained very robust governance and quality assurance arrangements for its conduct of the Procurement.

Given the complexity and size of the procurement and need for in-depth understanding of employment services and the Government's new policy and its objectives, as well as its sound record in successful purchasing, the Department did not investigate contracting out the tender process.