

**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_W48

Senator Humphries provided in writing.

Question

In its submission MercyCare states that at its debriefing session on 5 May 2009, a DEEWR Officer confirmed that only verbal feedback could be provided to unsuccessful tenderers. Can DEEWR confirm that this was the practice of the department in all cases? Why was written advice not available to unsuccessful tenderers relating to reasons for their lack of success?

Answer

The Department can confirm that, in accordance with the Request for Tender (RFT), oral debriefing was the practice used in all cases.

The purpose of the debriefing sessions was to provide tenderers with oral feedback on the evaluation of their tender bids. The Department considers that a useful debrief is important to assist each tenderer to understand how their submission was assessed and to provide information that might assist each tenderer with future tender submissions.

The RFT at section 3.2.4 clearly states that oral debriefings would be undertaken.

The provision for oral debriefing appeared in the Exposure Draft of the RFT and no adverse comment regarding it was received.

The provision of an oral debriefing is consistent with the Commonwealth Procurement Guidelines which require that an unsuccessful tenderer be given reasons why it was unsuccessful, but which do not require that the reasons be in writing. Oral debriefing is also consistent with usual Commonwealth tender practice and has been utilised for employment services since 1998.