

**Senator Jacqui Lambie:** asked the Minister representing the Minister for Government Services on 28 August 2024—

1. With respect to AAT and Federal Court proceedings *Warren v Chief Executive Officer, Services Australia*:
  - a. what was the original legal costs estimates from the external lawyers/counsel for the AAT;
  - b. how much has been invoiced by the external lawyers/counsel for the AAT proceedings;
  - c. what was the original legal costs estimates from the external lawyers/counsel for the Federal Court proceedings; and
  - d. how much has been invoiced by the external lawyers/counsel for the Federal Court proceedings

**Answer —**

The Minister representing the Minister for Government Services, the Hon Bill Shorten MP, has provided the following answer to the Senator's question:

The case of *Warren v Chief Executive Officer, Services Australia* was a significant matter that involved an appeal by Mr Warren from the Administrative Appeals Tribunal to the Full Federal Court of Australia (Federal Court). In defending this appeal, Services Australia consulted with the Attorney-General's Department and the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

- a. \$15,400 (GST inclusive) was the original legal costs estimate from the external lawyers received in January 2020 to provide initial prospects advice in relation to an appeal of the Information Commissioner's decision by the AAT. Further costs estimates were obtained as the matter progressed.
- b. **\$256,315.05** (GST inclusive) has been invoiced by the external lawyers/counsel for the AAT proceedings AAT 2019/7870. This includes costs set out in response 1a. (above) as well as further costs associated with and necessary applications, submissions and representations before the AAT in the period from early January 2020 through to October 2022.
- c. \$10,350 (GST inclusive) was the original legal costs estimates from the external lawyers received in October 2020 for initial advice in anticipation of the AAT decision to be handed down. A further cost estimate of \$52,625.00 (GST inclusive) from the external lawyers/counsel was received in March 2023 in relation to representation in Mr Warren's appeal to the Federal Court. Further costs estimates were obtained as the matter progressed.
- d. **\$394,188.71** (GST inclusive) has been invoiced by the external lawyers/counsel for the Federal Court proceedings. This includes costs set out in response 1c (above) as well as further costs associated with and necessary applications, submissions and representations before the Federal Court in the period from October 2022 through to present day (as at 4 September 2024).