

President of the Treasury Board
The Honourable Stockwell Day, P.C., M.P.

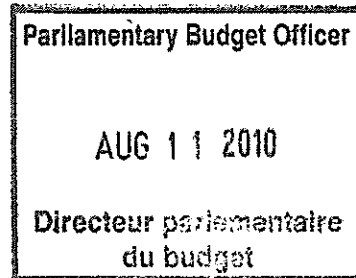


Président du Conseil du Trésor
L'honorable Stockwell Day, c.p., député

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0R5

AUG 06 2010

Mr. Kevin Page
Parliamentary Budget Officer
Library of Parliament
Parliament Buildings
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A9



Dear Mr. ~~Page~~ *Kevin*,

Thank you for your letter of May 19, 2010, regarding financial information for the Parliamentary Budget Officer's projection on federal direct program spending, and the example of the report that your office intends to produce. I have noted your comments.

My understanding is that, similar to your May 2009 request, you are seeking two sets of data from the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat: the first, a summary report detailing opening departmental reference levels and adjustments made through the most recent Annual Reference Level Update (ARLU) through 2013-14; and the second, a summary of items that have received Cabinet and/or budget approval or, in the case of re-profiling decisions, approval by the Department of Finance Canada, but which have yet to be briefed into departmental reference levels and included in the Estimates.

With regard to your first request, the Secretariat is able to provide a summary report showing opening reference levels for departments and agencies in the 2010-11 fiscal year, the aggregate of adjustments made through the 2010-11 ARLU, and the closing balances, broken down by the nature of expenditure (operating, capital, transfer payments, other subsidies/payments/revenues credited to the vote). An electronic copy of the report will be provided to your office.

In reference to the balance of the data that you requested, the Secretariat has revisited the matter and, together with the Department of Justice Canada, again determined that these records constitute confidences of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada.

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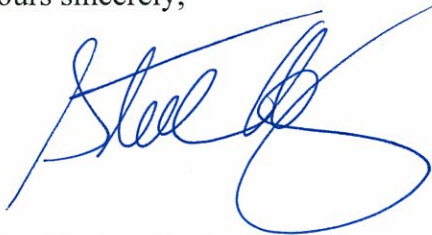
This is because, in the case of your first request, this data represents financial decisions that are yet to be considered by the Treasury Board before they can be presented to Parliament and made public in Parts I and II of the Main Estimates and/or Supplementary Estimates. In the case of your second request, this is because items that have received Cabinet and/or Budget approval have not yet been considered by the Treasury Board.

With respect to Part III of the Main Estimates—that is, the Reports on Plans and Priorities (RPPs)—these documents are tabled in Parliament by me on behalf of departmental ministers. The financial information (planned spending forecasts) in RPPs are the products of departments and agencies and do not necessarily represent the sum total of data housed by the Secretariat. RPP financial information is the highest level of description of funding decisions that are still being considered by Cabinet at the time of publication. Departments and agencies provide an insufficient level of detail to disaggregate these descriptions into their component data. Unlike the Secretariat's data related to planned spending, the RPP descriptions are sufficiently vague to not represent records that contain information about Cabinet confidences.

While I regret that I cannot provide you access to all of the financial data that you have requested, I appreciate the important role of the Parliamentary Budget Officer to provide independent analysis to the House of Commons and Senate. To that end, I echo last year's response to you from the Secretary of the Treasury Board, that much of the data to build your projection can be found in documents supporting the Government expense plan (Parts I and II of the Main Estimates and the Supplementary Estimates), Budget 2010 and departmental RPPs.

Again, thank you for writing.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Stockwell Day', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Hon. Stockwell Day