

*Requests for Information*

**Q. In reference to the evidence of Earl Ludlow, page 55, line 1, please provide figures showing the “rising cost of temporary labour” for the period 1999 to current and forecast.**

A. On page 55 of the *Operations & Customer Service Evidence* Mr. Ludlow indicates that the rising cost of temporary labour required to maintain the Contact Centre target of answering 80 per cent of calls in less than 40 seconds was addressed by installing telephone technology necessary to enable clerical staff in the Company’s regional offices to answer customer calls during peak periods.

Table 23 on Page 55 of the *Operations & Customer Service Evidence* shows that the Company’s capacity to respond immediately to incoming calls increased with the installation of this technology. The percentage of calls responded to by regional staff (“Remote Agents”) increased from zero in 1998 to approximately 4 per cent in 2001 and 2002.

As shown in Table 1 below, the cost of temporary labour in the Company’s Contact Centre in 1998 was approximately \$451,000. The introduction of Remote Agents in September of 1999 resulted in a reduction in temporary labour in the Contact Centre. Temporary labour in the Contact Centre reduced again in 2001 as a result of a reduced requirement for training of the Contact Centre’s regular staff. The actual 2002 costs and the forecast 2003 costs are in keeping with the 1999-2000 levels, and reflect on-going training needs of regular Contact Centre staff in these years.

| <b>Table 1</b><br><b>Temporary Labour Costs</b><br><b>Customer Contact Centre</b><br><b>1997-2003F</b><br><b>(\$000s)</b> |                         |
|---|-------------------------|
| <b>Year</b>   | <b>Temporary Labour</b> |
| 1998  | 451                     |
| 1999  | 369                     |
| 2000  | 400                     |
| 2001  | 270                     |
| 2002  | 339                     |
| 2003F   | 338                     |