



Australian Government
Department of Social Services

Ray Griggs AO CSC
Secretary

Senator Marielle Smith
Chair
Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee
Senate
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Senator

Chair,

**Correction of evidence in the Estimates Official Committee Hansard of Wednesday
14 February 2024**

I am writing to correct evidence I provided to the Committee during its examination of the Social Services Portfolio.

During the hearing on 14 February 2024 Senator Reynolds asked about what contact the Department of Social Services had with the Department of Home Affairs (Home Affairs) in relation to the recent NZYQ High Court decision on immigration detention. In my response I indicated I personally had not had contact with Home Affairs on the matter. However, I would like to correct this evidence.

I can confirm I was contacted on Friday 17 November 2023, by the then acting Secretary of Home Affairs, Ms Stephanie Foster PSM, in relation to work being undertaken by Home Affairs in relation to the NZYQ case. Ms Foster was seeking a staff member to support the establishment of VictimLink, a program to provide counsellor-led support to victims of crime relating to NZYQ High Court decision. This request was made in acknowledgement of experience and expertise of staff in the Department of Social Services in the delivery of trauma informed programs and policies.

In that conversation I agreed to the secondment of a Department of Social Services staff member, who was experienced in trauma informed practice, for a short period. The staff member was subsequently seconded to Home Affairs week from 20 November 2023 until 8 December 2023. Other than the phone conversation relating to staffing matters I had no further personal contact, or discussion on broader issues, relating to NZYQ.

Yours sincerely

22 February 2024