

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

16 FEBRUARY 2018

Question (Page 9, proof transcript)

Senator McALLISTER: At a practical level, is there a limitation on the utility of that mechanism for achieving social or political change related to how big it is? If 55,000 people register in the scheme it becomes less useful, presumably, than if the 500 people register that your submission indicates you think will be the registrations in the first—

Ms Harmer: Our estimates there come from the experience in the United States. Obviously, we have been assisted very much by the experience in the US, with their Foreign Agents Registration Act. While the legislation before the committee mirrors that to some extent, it's not identical. But our estimates of the number of registrants is based on that experience in the US and the kinds of activities that have been registered there, and also on the fact that they have had this scheme in operation for numerous decades—

Ms Inverarity: Since the 1930s.

Dr Southern: In various forms.

Ms Harmer: So they've had the opportunity to refine it and to engage. It's an accepted part that there is to be registration, and the number of registrants there is around these 700 or 800 mark or thereabouts.

Dr Southern: Yes, I think that's right.

Ms Marson: Thereabouts.

Mr LEESER: Sorry, was that a thousand?

Ms Marson: It was about 700 or 800.

Dr Southern: We can get back to you with those numbers. It is public somewhere.

Answer

There are currently 422 active registrants under the US *Foreign Agents Registration Act* (FARA) and 580 active foreign principals.

Additionally, there are 1982 active short form registrants. Unlike the scheme proposed in the Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme Bill, the FARA requires each partner, officer, director, associate, employee and agent of a registrant to file a short form registration statement