

Select Committee on Administration of Sports Grants

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Health

Select Committee on Administration of Sports Grants

28 February 2020

PDR Number: IQ20-000005

Question Number: 3

Question Subject: Departmental Liaison Officers

Type of Questions: Hansard, page 24

Questioner: Senator Green

Question:

Ms Beauchamp: We would have had DLOs working in the office, yes.

Senator GREEN: Do you know how many?

Ms Beauchamp: At any particular point in time?

Senator GREEN: Yes.

Ms Beauchamp: Whatever the allocation was that was provided we would have provided the necessary number.

Dr Studdert: It was probably just one, but we can check the number.

Senator GREEN: So it was probably just one, but it could have been more?

Dr Studdert: Senator McKenzie had a number of portfolios and departments that she was working to in that regional services role. We can certainly take that on notice and give you that number.

Answer:

When Senator McKenzie was the Minister for Sport (April 2018 to April 2019), she had an allocation of one (1) Departmental Liaison Officer (DLO) from the Department of Health.

Senate Select Committee on Administration of Sports Grants

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Health

Senate Select Committee on Administration of Sports Grants

PDR Number: IQ20-000008

Question Number: 1, 2, 4 and 5

Question Subject: Select Committee on Administration of Sports Grants - Meeting, Notes about meeting, record keeping, documents and spreadsheets

Question 1 Subject: Meeting

Type of Questions: Hansard, page 23

Questioner: Senator Farrell

Question:

Senator FARRELL: I'm sure you do, but this seemed to be triggered by the Auditor-General's report.

Ms Beauchamp: You are saying that it 'seemed to be'.

Senator FARRELL: Yes.

Ms Beauchamp: I don't want to speculate on what might have been the exact trigger for that meeting. I do not want to do that. I will have to take it on notice to find out exactly.

Answer:

The department became aware of the audit in late March. The reported meeting was some weeks later on 5 or 10 April. There does not appear to be any connection.

Question 2 Subject: Notes about meetings

Type of Questions: Hansard, page 24

Questioner: Senator Farrell

Question:

Senator FARRELL: Would you have taken notes at this meeting? If you have a meeting with the chair of—

Ms Beauchamp: Generally I do, yes.

Senator FARRELL: Where do you keep your notes?

Ms Beauchamp: It's interesting you should say that because it's my last day in the Public Service—

Senator FARRELL: You haven't lost them, have you?

Ms Beauchamp: No. I have destroyed all of my notebooks and notes.

Senator FARRELL: You have destroyed them all?

Ms Beauchamp: Yes, I have.

Senator FARRELL: Is that standard practice?

Ms Beauchamp: I should not have notebooks and things as a private citizen after midnight tonight.

Senator FARRELL: Why wouldn't you just leave them with your department to—

Ms Beauchamp: They were my notebooks. But I can talk to Mr Wylie and Ms Palmer about that meeting.

Senator FARRELL: Could you?

Ms Beauchamp: Yes, and I'll see what I can find out. As I said, I don't want to speculate. I don't want to give you impressions. I don't want to make assumptions. I want to make sure I have availed myself of the facts.

Answer:

Ms Beauchamp spoke to Mr Wylie and neither has any specific recollection of the meeting as reported by Ms Palmer.

Question 4 Subject: Record keeping

Type of Questions: Hansard, page 26

Questioner: Senator Rice

Question:

Ms Beauchamp: Could I just say: my notebooks are. Sometimes I do, absolutely, for decision-making purposes and record keeping, identify decisions made and actions taken, and I do provide that to both my executive assistant and chief of staff.

Senator RICE: If you could take on notice what you are able to provide us at about that meeting.

Ms Beauchamp: Sure.

Answer:

The Department has no record of any meeting in the form reported by Ms Palmer.

Question 5 Subject: Documents and spreadsheets

Type of Questions: Hansard, page 31

Questioner: Senator Farrell

Question Subject: Documents and spreadsheets

Questioner: Senator Farrell

Question:

Senator FARRELL: I want to make sure I was clear about those questions I asking you earlier about that meeting, to make sure I got the position Ms Palmer was putting as accurately as I could. I want to put back on the record her recollection of this meeting; that might assist you in providing any further information. She said that that morning, just as she was walking into estimates, she saw the colour coded document for the first time. That triggered that something needed to be done. A meeting was then held between you, her and Mr Wylie. Her comments were:

It was brief, because of the lateness—

so we therefore know it was a late-night meeting, not late in the afternoon—

but it was then referred to our finance and risk committee. Obviously at that point the Auditor-General had announced the audit and obviously our agreement to fully participate in that process.

That seems to be the two things linking this meeting. If you can provide us with any additional information—

Ms Beauchamp: As I said, I think the Auditor-General had already informed us towards the end of March—

Senator FARRELL: Yes, I think that's correct. I think that's what Ms Palmer is saying here. She's got this colour coded spreadsheet, the auditor has got the inquiry and you then have a meeting to discuss it.

Ms Beauchamp: You have referred to 'the' colour coded document. I am not aware of 'the' colour coded document you're referring to.

Senator GREEN: I'm going to ask you some questions about documents, so we can probably clear that up.

Ms Beauchamp: I'll take it to try and find out—

Senator FARRELL: But that was the trigger for Ms Palmer's understanding as to why there needed to be—

Ms Beauchamp: I think it was the advice coming back from the office about the approval process.

Answer:

The Department has no record of any meeting in the form reported by Ms Palmer.