



**ASIC**  
Australian Securities &  
Investments Commission

<b>Committee</b>	Parliamentary Joint Committee on Corporations and Financial Services
<b>Inquiry</b>	Oversight of ASIC, the Takeovers Panel and the Corporations Legislation
<b>Question No.</b>	042
<b>Topic</b>	PwC - Linklaters inquiry
<b>Reference</b>	Spoken, 20 October 2023, Hansard page 47
<b>Committee member</b>	Senator Deborah O'Neill

## Question

**CHAIR:** You are also engaged internationally in the standards that relate to audit, and you speak to and have interactions with other regulators around the world. The Mr Peter-John Collins matter links PwC Australia to PwC Global. I don't know whether you have seen the press release regarding the Linklaters inquiry into the six participants at global level—which I found completely unsatisfactory, by the way. Do you have any communications with the SEC, the PCAOB in the US or any other regulators in any other jurisdiction?

**Mr Longo:** I am not aware of any such correspondence. I don't know whether Mr Yanco is aware of any.

**Mr Yanco:** Not that I am aware of.

**CHAIR:** I ask you to look at the evidence which the F&PA committee received. Have a good look at the Linklaters material that was provided. We discerned—I am pretty sure this is correct—that Mr Burrowes himself has not seen the details of that inquiry. PwC's current leadership—the CEO and the supporting people he brought with him—were able to tell us that six individuals were involved, some of whom were no longer with the firm, and some of whom were with the firm, and some penalties were applied. It was very unclear about the interaction with the SEC and the PCAOB on that end as well. This is of concern to me. The modus operandi of these big firms is that they are international firms and they are connected; that is something they sell. They can't suddenly be disconnected when it is proved that one of their partners is not a fit-and-proper person. Perhaps you could take that on notice.

**Ms Court:** Yes.

## Answer

We are not aware of any correspondence from the SEC or the PCAOB about the PwC Linklaters inquiry. We were not aware that the PwC Network had appointed Linklaters to undertake the assessment of what happened in relation to the sharing of confidential information by PwC Australia.

Under our statement of protocol with the PCAOB we cooperate with them in the oversight of auditors subject to the regulatory jurisdiction of both the PCAOB and ASIC. The PCAOB's jurisdiction covers registered public accounting firms; while the ASIC's jurisdiction focuses on the persons who audit companies, whether or not as a member of a firm. There are limitations about what information can be shared due to confidentiality requirements.

The PwC Australia matter relates to the conduct of tax practitioners and not auditors.

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