

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES – 2 MARCH 2017 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Human Services

Topic: Information release – legal advice

Question reference number: 3 (HS 3)

Senator: Siewert

Type of question: Hansard page 14

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 21 April 2017

Number of pages: 1

Question:

- a) Senator SIEWERT: In terms of the information that was released by the minister, did he come back to you to check the veracity of the information?

Mr Hutson: We do not know the totality of the information that would have been released. As I think I mentioned earlier, we said we would take that on notice. Certainly, there was checking of facts and so forth in the preparation of statements with respect to this case, yes.

Senator SIEWERT: So there was checking of the facts?

Mr Hutson: There was certainly checking of facts.

- b) Senator SIEWERT: How many resources were used and how much time did it take for you to do your statement, provide the additional information to the minister and then check with the minister?

Ms Campbell: I think we would have to take that on notice to see what actual documents were put through—the emails and the like.

Answer:

- a) Yes, there was checking of the facts.
- b) The Department does not measure time in that way; unlike an accounting or legal firm, the Department does not measure in minutes. Providing a reliable assessment would involve an unreasonable diversion of resources.