

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications**

**Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice**

**Additional Estimates Hearings February 2016**

**Communications Portfolio**

**Department of Communications and the Arts**

**Question No: 77**

**Program 2.1**

**Hansard Ref: Written, Date 19/02/2016**

**Topic: Shared Services**

**Senator Bilyk, Catryna asked:**

At the last Estimates we were told that all questions relating to the shared services have to be now directed to another department, Attorney-General's. How can the Ministry continue to exercise its proper oversight role of the NCIs when it has no knowledge of their management programs, including finances, property, security, human resources?

**Answer:**

The implementation of shared services by the Canberra-based national cultural institutions is properly the responsibility of each institution. It is neither the responsibility, nor appropriate for the Ministry for the Arts to make operational decisions on behalf of these independent agencies.

The Ministry for the Arts has attended each Shared Services meeting held between the national cultural institutions and Attorney-General's Department following the government decision announced in the 2014 Budget. The Ministry for the Arts continues to be involved in Shared Services meetings with the Attorney-General's Department and those agencies that utilise those services.

The Ministry for the Arts also attends governing Board and Council meetings held by the national cultural institutions and is able to assist the governing Board or Council with advice should it be sought and is also able to articulate to the Board or Council the expectations of the Government.