

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications**

**Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice**

**Additional Estimates Hearings February 2016**

**Communications Portfolio**

**nbn**

**Question No: 84**

**nbn**

**Hansard Ref: Page 99, 9/02/2016**

**Topic: QoNs lodgement**

**Senator Urquhart, Anne asked:**

**Senator Urquhart:** Mr Morrow, first of all I want to raise the issue of the timing of questions on notice from the last estimates. They were due on 4 December last year, but not received until this month. In particular, there was one that had a response—and I am talking about question No. 127—that refers to a status 'as at November 12'. But, again, the responses were not sent to the committee until about three months later, so that was four days ago. Can you advise what date this response was sent to the minister's office by nbn?

**Mr Morrow:** Certainly. I believe the list of questions was finalised by the committee and sent us on 9 November. As I recall, the Hansard deadline was 14 December for response. Even earlier than that, by 4 December, we had basically given a response to 80 per cent of those questions. Roughly, by 4 or 5 December we had sent answers to 56 of 57 of the questions I received. The final one was sent late.

**Senator Urquhart:** Minister, you might be able to respond as to why the questions were held up in your office. If they were sent by nbn co on 4 and 5 December—

**Senator Fifield:** I would imagine they would then go via the department.

**Senator Urquhart:** Can the department help us out?

**Senator Fifield:** I cannot give you the time line for each set of questions for each agency across Communications and the Arts. That is not something I retain in my head.

**Senator Urquhart:** Can the department advise us when they were sent to the minister's office?

**Mr Robinson:** I do not have that information. I am aware the secretary this morning essentially indicated that we need to do better in the future on timing so that is our aim.

**Senator Urquhart:** Are you able to provide those dates on notice?

**Mr Robinson:** Yes, I will take it on notice.

**Senator Urquhart:** Minister, can you provide what date you received them?

**Senator Fifield:** We will take that on notice.

**Answer:**

The Department of Communications and the Arts sent most of the nbn questions on notice to the Minister's office during December 2015 and in early January 2016.