

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications

Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice

Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearings October 2015

Communications Portfolio

Department of Communications and the Arts or the

Question No: 5

Program 1.1

Hansard Ref: Page 6-7, 20/10/2015

Topic: Briefings - Members of Parliament

Senator Dastyari, Sam asked:

Senator DASTYARI: Mr Robinson, have any MPs been provided briefs? Has anyone, apart from the minister, been given a copy of an individual seat brief, that you are aware of or been briefed on their own seat?

Mr Robinson: We prepared factual information based on the NBN plan. We have provided it to the minister's office. I do not believe that the department has done any briefing.

Senator DASTYARI: Okay. The answer is 'no' then. You provided it to the minister's office and you did not go beyond that point. You have not been involved with any briefings of any individual MPs.

Mr Robinson: That is right.

Senator DASTYARI: Obviously the question comes to the minister. Minister, have you been involved in any briefings of any members of parliament or has your office been involved with any briefings of members of parliament about their individual seats, using this information?

Senator Fifield: I will check. I am sure there have been, but let me take that on notice so I can give you a full and accurate answer.

Ms O'Loughlin: What the department has done is just take the plan that the nbn has developed and done various cuts of the data. As has been mentioned at this committee previously, it is always open for members of parliament to approach the nbn for briefings about their roll-out schedule in various areas across Australia.

Senator DASTYARI: Minister, to be clear, the question is: Using this information that was produced by the department, have you provided briefings to individual members of parliament? It sounds like you are saying that there are some that you are aware of and there may be others you are not aware of.

Senator Fifield: I am sure the answer would be 'yes', but I am happy to take that on notice.

Answer:

The briefing material referred to was prepared by the Department for the Minister for Communications and the Arts and his staff in October 2015. The Minister's office has indicated that it would be happy to brief Members of Parliament on the NBN.