

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice
Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearings October 2016
Communications Portfolio
NBN Co Limited

Question No: 161

NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: Page 9

Topic: Op-ed awareness

Senator Dastyari asked:

Senator DASTYARI: Mr Morrow, in previous estimates—you might want to take this away and come back to us—you said that you were aware of the op-ed on the 25th and 26th. That is when you first became aware of it. The elements that Dr Switkowski has given is that it was raised at a board meeting on the 23rd. Did you want to review the evidence you have given?

Mr Morrow: No, it has been quite consistent in what I have said and what the chairman just said—

Senator DASTYARI: It is completely different.

Mr Morrow: No, it is not. I am quite well aware of what I had said. The Sunday before is when the chairman had mentioned that we wanted to put an opinion piece out there, because he believed there were numerous misrepresentations about the company that were false and quite damaging to the company. In the board meeting on the next day he raised the issue for discussion with both Karina, who was in the board meeting for a particular agenda topic, and the rest of the board members. The opinion piece was put together within a couple of days after that, and, as we talked about in the last Senate hearing, that is when the PM&C advice had taken place.

Senator DASTYARI: I would strongly suggest you consider reviewing the evidence that you gave. I have that evidence in front of me; you do not have it in front of you. I will give you the opportunity to take this on notice and reflect on that. The information you gave to us is that you were made aware on the 25th and 26th. That, in my opinion, would fly very much in the face of having a discussion about it at a board meeting prior to that date. I do not think it is fair to put you in a position to deal with that right now, so I will give you an opportunity to reflect on the evidence you have given to this committee.

Mr Morrow: I am happy to. Nothing has changed since the last testimony that I gave.

Answer:

nbn CEO Bill Morrow responded to this matter later during the hearing. Please refer to pages 16-17 of the *Hansard* from the hearing on 25 November 2016.