

Senate Committee: Education and Employment

**QUESTION ON NOTICE
Additional Estimates 2015 - 2016**

Outcome: Skills and Training

Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ16-000506

Senator Carr, Kim provided in writing.

Cornerstone Investment Australia Pty Ltd

Question

Can you confirm that the provider Cornerstone Investment Australia Pty Ltd has received approximately \$90 million in VET FEE-HELP funding? Has the provider been ordered by a court to repay this money? If so, has that been done?

Answer

Cornerstone Investments was approved as a VET provider on 2 November 2011, and to date has received a total of \$94,459,228 in VET FEE-HELP funding.

Cornerstone Investments has not been ordered by a court to repay this money.

However, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) announced on 9 December 2015 that it was taking action against Cornerstone Investment Aust. Pty Ltd (trading as Empower Institute). The Commonwealth, through the Department of Education and Training has joined this action.

The ACCC and the Commonwealth are seeking declarations, injunctions, and orders for the repayment of course fees paid by the Commonwealth to Cornerstone in respect of any VET FEE-HELP loans cancelled by court order, as well as costs. A Federal Court hearing is scheduled for 17 October 2016.