

Senate Committee: Education and Employment

**QUESTION ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018**

Outcome: Schools and Youth

Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ17-000672

Senator Hanson-Young, Sarah asked on 01 June 2017, Proof Hansard page 70

Catholic system audits

Question

Senator HANSON-YOUNG: Have you ever audited the Catholic system?

Mr Cook: Audited?

Senator HANSON-YOUNG: Yes.

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Senator HANSON-YOUNG: Have you done that in any of the Catholic systems across the country?

Mr Cook: Not that I am aware of. We normally go at a school level rather than a systemic level—that is my understanding. I would be happy to take that on notice.

Answer

The Department of Education and Training has not audited the Catholic Education Commissions as approved system authorities. The department does undertake annual checks of information provided by approved authorities for non-government schools in relation to their accountability and reporting obligations for funding provided under the *Australian Education Act 2013*.

This includes basic financial viability assessments to ensure schools' ongoing capacity to deliver education and to satisfy accountability requirements, which are informed by an annual financial questionnaire, annual census, audit opinions provided by schools and, where necessary, additional information from schools. In addition, authorities are required to submit a financial accountability certificate each year, completed by a qualified accountant, confirming that funds are spent for the purposes for which they were granted.

Approved authorities for more than one school and government systems are also required to provide the department with a breakdown of how they have distributed funding under the Act, broken down by base amount and need.