

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates 26 May-6 June 2014

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Outcome/Program: 1.1 Prime Minister and Cabinet

Topic: Aboriginals Benefit Account grants

Senator: Senator Cory Bernardi

Question reference number: 134

Type of Question: FPA, Friday 30 May 2014, page 21

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 11 July 2014

Number of pages: 2

Question:

Ms Carroll: As the minister has outlined, there is a process around the Aboriginal Benefit Account grant. There is a process with the committee, as well as a process where, at the end of the day, it is the minister who signs off on those particular grants. Advice would come from the department as well.

CHAIR: Did the committee recommend this grant go ahead?

Ms Carroll: I would have to take that on notice. I would have to check about whether we actually regularly made that kind of information available.

CHAIR: Okay. Did the department recommend that this grant go ahead?

Ms Carroll: I would have to take that on notice and look at the process as well. But, normally, that would be advice to government, which we would not normally reveal during the course of this—

CHAIR: Ms Edwards has clearly come to the table to be helpful. Are you able to shed any light on this?

Ms Edwards: Only a very small amount of additional information, just to say that I am aware there was an ABA grant given in February 2012 and that all funds have been released; all funding activities have ceased, but the final reporting is yet to happen. I do not have anything additional in relation to the additional matters.

CHAIR: You are unable to tell me whether this grant was recommended by either the committee or the department to the minister?

Ms Edwards: I would have to take that on notice and have the details of all the various grants.

Answer:

Both the Department and the Aboriginals Benefit Account Advisory Committee provided advice in relation to the grant application. The Department does not ordinarily disclose the content of the advice provided.

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