

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
BUDGET ESTIMATES 2015-16

Finance Portfolio
27-28 May 2015

Department/Agency: Australian Electoral Commission

Outcome/Program: General

Topic: Australian Electoral Commission – Sen Cormann LP Campaign Fund

Senator: Ludwig

Question reference number: F83

Type of question:

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: Friday, 10 July 2015

Number of pages: 2

Question:

Referring to the Liberal Party of Australia Annual Disclosure 2012-13:

1. Was it determined by the Commission that the Senator M Cormann LP Campaign Fund was a party unit of the Liberal Party WA Division?
 - a) If yes, why did this party unit donate to the National Division of the Liberal Party and not the state branch for the Federal campaign, like most other party units?
 - b) Did this Campaign fund expend any money for political purposes?
 - i. If no, so it just made an \$80,000 donation to the Liberal Party National Division?
 - ii. If no, how does the Commission know whether the Fund expended money for political purposes?
 - iii. If yes, was this included in the WA Divisions Return?
 - c) If no, is it an associated entity under 287(1) of the Commonwealth Electoral Act?
 - i. Is there an Associated Entity disclosure for this fund?
 - ii. If no, why?
 - iii. If yes, could it please be provided to the committee?
2. How does the Commission know if donors have donated to this fund in excess of \$12,100?

Answer:

1. The Commission is satisfied on the information available that the Senator M Cormann LP Campaign Fund is a party unit of the Liberal Party (W.A. Division) Inc.
 - a) There is no restriction under the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* (the Act) on party units donating funds outside their party.
 - b) Under the Act, there is no definition of 'expenditure for political purposes'.
 - i. As required under the Act, the Liberal Party of Australia (Federal Division) disclosed a receipt of \$90 000.
 - ii. Please refer to answer i. above
 - iii. Not applicable because it is not an associated entity.
 - c) The Senator M Cormann LP Campaign Fund is not an associated entity under s.287(1) of the Act
 - i.– iii. Not applicable because it is not an associated entity.
2. As a party unit of the Liberal Party (W.A. Division) Inc. all receipts above the disclosure threshold are detailed in the return lodged for the party.