AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: INNOVATION, INDUSTRY, SCIENCE AND RESEARCH

TOPIC: Commercialisation Australia

REFERENCE: Question on Notice (Hansard, 30 May 2011, E71)

QUESTION No.: BI-26

Senator EGGLESTON: Suppose we just deal with the material conflicts.
Senator EGGLESTON: Minister, I do not know whether you can answer this. Do you think the minister would be disturbed by the quantity of these cases and could you give us a sense of when, in your mind, it might be necessary to step in and make procedural or personnel changes in the light of all of these conflicts of interest? Is there a point or a particular number of cases where you might feel it was necessary to make changes?
Senator Sherry: It is fairly hypothetical.
Senator EGGLESTON: It is a bit hypothetical, but we are just trying to feel out when you would see it is important.
Senator Sherry: It is not for me to indicate on behalf of my colleague Senator Carr.
Senator EGGLESTON: Absolutely—I understand that.
Senator Sherry: I would really have to take that on notice.

ANSWER

As a committee of the Innovation Australia Board, the Commercialisation Australia Board has adopted robust and conservative best practice disclosure of interest procedures to ensure that its customers, the general public, and the Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research can be confident in the integrity of its decision making processes. The disclosure of interest framework is outlined on the AusIndustry website (www.ausindustry.gov.au) on the Innovation Australia page. The Innovation Australia Disclosure of Interest Guidelines are also provided at Appendix C of the Innovation Australia Annual Report 2009-10. In the event that the Commercialisation Australia Board was unable to form a quorum due to conflicts of interest, then the matter would be referred to the full Board of Innovation Australia for determination.