

Topic: Honours system

Senator: (Bob) BROWN

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Answer:

(a) Nominations for awards in the Order of Australia are confidential; disclosure of a nominator's identity would breach assurances of confidentiality under which nominations are made.

(b) The citation for Mr Takaku's appointment as an honorary Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in 2005 reads "For service to Australia-Japan relations, particularly the Young Political Leaders Exchange Program".

In 1991 Mr Takaku was instrumental in setting up the Australia-Japan Young Political Leaders Exchange Programme (a programme of the Australian Political Exchange Council) and he served as chief project officer until 2000. Following his retirement from that position, Mr Takaku continued to coordinate meetings between Australians visiting Japan and important figures in Japanese business, academia and politics.

(c) The Order of Australia consists of a General Division and a Military Division. Honorary awards in both Divisions of the Order may be made to people who are not Australian citizens where it is desirable that the person be honoured by Australia.

Anyone can nominate an Australian citizen or other person for an award in the General Division of the Order of Australia. Nominations for Australian citizens are considered by the Council for the Order of Australia which makes recommendations on awards direct to the Governor-General. Honorary awards for non-Australian citizens are made by the Governor-General on the recommendation of the Prime Minister.

Nominations for awards, including honorary awards, in the Military Division of the Order of Australia are made to the Governor-General on the recommendation of the Minister for Defence.