

Answer to Question on Notice

Dept/Agency: Department of the Senate (President)

Topic:

Senator: Faulkner

QON reference No: 5

Hansard page reference: p. 8

Senator FAULKNER: An understanding? That is fine. That is an understanding. I am trying to establish whether there was a formal decision beyond an understanding. If things are done on the basis of an understanding, we have got a problem.

Senator Hogg: I will check to see if, at a meeting with the then presiding officers, there was a formal decision taken by the presiding officers and I will get back to you. My recollection was that it was to be a response by the Department of Parliamentary Services to the inquiry.

Senator FAULKNER: I would be interested in understanding when the decision was made, who made the decision. If you were able to provide that information, which you cannot, which I accept, at the hearing this morning I would explore why that decision was made. But of course that can wait for a rainy day.

Senator Hogg: We will take that on notice.

Senator FAULKNER: If you could establish for me what the background to that decision was, I would appreciate it. I might explore that then at a later stage.

ANSWER:

The Presiding Officers considered the Committee's Inquiry into the Performance of the Department of Parliamentary Services on 6 July 2011. The Presiding Officers agreed that the Department should cooperate fully with the Committee's Inquiry and, noting that the inquiry was being conducted by a Senate committee who would report only to the Senate, agreed that the Department prepare a response to the Committee's recommendations when its final report was tabled. The Presiding Officers monitored the progress of the inquiry. The President wrote, on behalf of the Presiding Officers, to the Committee about the inquiry on 13 September 2011. The Department prepared a response to the report of the Committee which was approved by the President and tabled on the President's behalf by the Acting Deputy President on 7 February 2013.