



Australian Government
Attorney-General's Department

Deputy Secretary
Civil Justice and Legal Services

09/12862

1 June 2009

Mr Peter Hallahan
Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Legal
and Constitutional Affairs
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr Hallahan

Corrections to Hansard – Budget Estimates – Attorney-General's Portfolio – 25 May 2009

I am writing to provide some corrections and clarifications to information I provided at the recent Estimates.

On page 109 of the transcript, I said that 'I think the details' of selection criteria for recently advertised Federal Court judicial appointments were on our website. In fact, they were removed from the website shortly after the period for expressions of interest and nominations closed. However, it is intended that the selection criteria and other information about the process will soon be included on the website.

The portfolio response to Additional Estimates 2008-2009 Question on Notice 115 from Senator Barnett about consultancies includes reference to item 322 - \$9,570 paid by the Federal Magistrates Court in relation to a Review commissioned by the Attorney-General's Department, *Future Governance Options for Federal Family Law Courts in Australia – Striking the Right Balance*. On page 112 of the transcript I referred to this item as a continuation of the Review conducted by the Department into the delivery by the federal courts of family law services. This is not correct. On 27 May 2009 I tabled corrections to Question on Notice 115 and a one page document which summarises all consultancies by the Attorney-General's Department, the Family Court and Federal Magistrates Court with Des Semples and Associates.

I was asked by Senator Brandis, at page 119 of the transcript, about whether a policy decision had been made about the jurisdiction to be exercised by Federal Magistrates if they did not resign their commissions in the Federal Magistrates Court. At page 120 of the transcript, in my response, I said that I was "pretty sure" that no decision had been made by the Attorney or the Government.

However, my recollection was incorrect. The Government has decided that only family law jurisdiction should be retained by the Federal Magistrates Court should some Federal Magistrates not resign their commissions.

Also on page 119 of the transcript, I referred to Chief Federal Magistrate Pascoe as having been present at a meeting of the Family law Advisory Group. In fact, Chief Federal Magistrate Pascoe participated by telephone.

On page 126 of the transcript I referred to a press release by the Attorney-General of 4 May 2009. That press release was issued on 5 May 2009.

At the Senate Estimates hearing on 25 May 2009, on page 101 of the transcript, in a statement by Senator Barnett, 'federal courts' has been erroneously transcribed as 'Federal Court'. A similar error occurs on page 112 of the transcript in my evidence where 'federal courts structural review' has been transcribed as 'Federal Court's structural review.'

Yours sincerely



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