

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT

Program 3.1

Question No. 146

Senator Heffernan asked the following question at the hearing on 27 May 2009:

In relation to the sale of Cocos Island (Quarantine Station), at Additional Estimates on 23 February 2009, Dr Conall O'Connell stated "we have moved to transfer it to the Attorney-General's Department ... and that has been done."

- a) Can you confirm that the care of Cocos Islands quarantine station has passed from DAFF to the Attorney General's Department?
- b) Can you confirm that the Government is in the process of disposing of the land occupied by Australia's only Government owned quarantine station at Cocos Islands? What stage are the negotiations to dispose of it at? What is the timeline?
- c) Which section in the Attorney-General's Department is looking after this matter?
- d) Could I have the name of the contact officer in the Attorney-General's Department in charge of this issue?
- e) Why is the Government pursuing such a course of action?

The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:

- a) The management of the former Quarantine Station on West Island, Cocos (Keeling) Islands was transferred from the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry to the Attorney-General's Department (the Department) on 22 December 2008.
- b) The Department is not in the process of disposing of any portion of the former Quarantine Station.
- c) The Territories West Branch, Territories and Information Law Division, is responsible for management of the site.
- d) The contact officer in the Department is Julian Yates, Assistant Secretary, Territories West.
- e) See answer to (b) above.