

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

Output 1.1

Question No. 19

Senator Brandis asked the following question at the hearing on 20 October 2008:

In relation to Mr Des Semple's review of the delivery by the Family Court and Federal Magistrates Court of family law services:

- (a) provide the dates that each of Mr Semple's drafts to various sections of the report were provided to the Department
- (b) to whom in the Department were they provided
- (c) what process of consultation between Mr Semple and officers of the department followed each iteration
- (d) provide all email exchanges, minutes of relevant telephone conversations and minutes of any meeting between officers of the Department and Mr Semple, and
- (e) provide copies of each iteration, of each draft, of each section of the report.

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

(a) The development of the report was a collaborative process between the Department and Mr Semple until the report was provided to the Attorney-General in September 2008.

(b) Drafts of the report and comments on material provided by the Department from Mr Semple were provided to Mr Ian Govey, Deputy Secretary, Civil Justice and Legal Services Group, and officers of the Civil Justice Division.

(c) The process of consultation involved emails, telephone contacts and face-to-face meetings.

(d) and (e) It would not be appropriate to make available email exchanges, minutes and drafts of the report. They represent deliberations on a series of matters relating to the administration of justice that have taken place in the course of the deliberative process involved in the function of Government, the disclosure of which would be contrary to the public interest.