

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

Corporate/cross-portfolio/general

Question No. 35

Senators Singh and Ludwig asked the following question at the hearing on 18 November 2013:

Senator SINGH: The department made an assessment of the incoming minister's briefs for then Attorney-General Roxon and approved its release on 2012. Was the department's assessment that it was in the public interest to release that document at that time?

Mr Wilkins: I am not sure it was as simple as that, releasing the—I do not think that was the view taken by the department at that time. I will need to check, but I do not think that is correct.

Senator LUDWIG: Could you take on notice how it was released?

Mr Wilkins: I do not think it was released.

Senator SINGH: It was.

Senator LUDWIG: I am just trying to remember how it was released—whether it was released by a decision of the FOI office within the department or whether the minister himself released it.

Mr Wilkins: We think it was released in part. I will take that on notice.

Senator SINGH: All right, take it on notice.

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

A decision was made by an officer of the Attorney-General's Department to grant access in part to the incoming minister's brief provided to the then Attorney-General, the Hon Nicola Roxon MP.