

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

Group 3

Program 1.7

Question No. 37

Senator Cameron asked the following question at the hearing on 18 November 2013:

Senator CAMERON: ... On 28 October Mr Keenan said the situation was 'under review and the emergency declaration had been signed quickly to channel funding to those most in need'. Can you outline to me the review process that has taken place within the department on this payment for disaster recovery?

...

Senator CAMERON: ... I am simply asking what processes were undertaken in the department to review this when it was clear that many people went over and above the criteria by a long way? What processes were undertaken to review within the department?

...

Senator CAMERON: ... I asked you that given the minister indicated it was under review and that the local member, Louise Markus, said it was under review and given that the Minister for Human Resources said it was under review, I am asking you—and you can take it on notice—to provide me with all details of the review processes that were undertaken within the department.

Mr Wilkins: With due respect, I think that is exactly what Mr Sheehan was trying to explain to you—the process of gathering data. Because the review process is an empirical process for a start. He was explaining to you how we get the data that will inform discussions with the minister about whether or not the criteria are satisfactory.

Senator CAMERON: I do not want your short-hand answer. I want a thorough detailed answer to all of the discussions that took place within the department, any correspondence in the department on the review and any correspondence between the department and any of those ministers or the local member on the review.

Senator Brandis: The officers will do their best to meet your question, to the extent to which they can appropriately do so without disclosing advice to the minister.

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

Please refer to question 1 of question on notice number 47 which outlines the review process.