

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

Group 3

Program 1.7

Question No. 46

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

I refer to the article in the Sydney Morning Herald on 21 October 2013 page 5 in which “a spokeswoman for Mr Keenan said the government had set up the payment so that it would reach those most in need, most quickly” and the article in the Australian on 28 October 2013 page 5 in which Mr Keenan said yesterday the situation was "under review" and the emergency declaration had been signed quickly to channel funding to those most in need.

1. Did the AGD/EMA provide advice to Minister Keenan on the prioritisation of payments?
2. Did the Department of Human Services raise the issue of prioritisation with AGD/EMA and/or Minister for Justice?
3. Did the Minister for Justice raise the issue of prioritisation with the AGD/EMA?
4. Has AGD prepared operational instructions in respect of the AGDRP determination made on 18 October? If so provide the instructions.

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

1. It is not appropriate for the Department to provide information on specific recommendations or advice provided to the Minister for Justice.
2. No. The Department of Human Services has no decision-making role in the activation of AGDRP.
3. It is not appropriate for the Department to provide information on specific recommendations or advice provided to the Minister for Justice.
4. Yes. Please see attached.