

Minister Representing the Prime Minister in the Senate and Other Ministers

SENATE QUESTION

Government Administration

Question No. 117

Senator Minchin asked the Minister representing the Prime Minister in the Senate and Other Ministers on 13 February 2008: With reference to Senator Minchin's letter to the Minister representing the Prime Minister, dated 1 February 2008, can the following information be provided prior to each round of Estimates and for Additional Estimates by 13 February 2008:

(1) (a) What appointments have been made by the Government (through Executive Council, Cabinet and ministers) to statutory authorities, executive agencies and advisory boards within the Minister's portfolio; and (b) for each appointment, what are the respective appointee's credentials.

(2) How many vacancies remain to be filled by ministerial (including Cabinet and Executive Council) appointments.

(3) What grants have been approved by the Minister from within the Minister's portfolio.

(4) What requests have been submitted to the Department of Finance and Deregulation to move funds within the Minister's portfolio.

Senator Evans – The Prime Minister has provided the following answer to the honourable senator's question:

(1) The following appointments had been made as at 18 February 2008:

The Merit Protection Commissioner: Ms Annwyn Godwin, appointed by the Governor-General for a term of 5 years. Ms Godwin was selected for this position through a merit-based selection process. Prior to her appointment she was an Assistant Secretary in the People Services Branch of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, and the National Manager, Staffing, in the Australian Customs Service;

The Australian Electoral Officer for Queensland: Ms Anne Bright, re-appointed by the Governor-General for a term of 5 years. Ms Bright was first appointed to this position for a 5 year term in January 2003;

The Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority: Dr Eva Bennet-Jenkins, appointed by the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry for a term of 5 years. Dr Bennet-Jenkins was selected for this position through a merit-based selection process. Prior to her appointment she was the Acting CEO (from July 2007), and a Program Manager with the Authority;

The Director-General of the Australian Secret Intelligence Service (ASIS): Mr David Irvine AO, appointed by the Governor-General for a term of 3 years. Mr Irvine has been the Director-General since March 2003. The Government believes that Mr Irvine's personal qualities, expertise and breadth of experience, as demonstrated by his successful leadership of the Service over the last five years, commend him to continue to exercise his responsibilities as Director-General of ASIS. In accordance with legislative requirements, the Prime Minister consulted the Leader of the Opposition, who fully supported Mr Irvine's reappointment.

The Chairman of the National Curriculum Board: Professor Barry McGaw, appointed by the Minister for Education for a period of 3 years. Professor McGaw is the Director of the University of Melbourne's new Melbourne Education Research Institute and has held executive positions with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) based in Paris, and the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER);

The Queensland representative on the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority: Mr Ken Smith, appointed by the Governor-General for a term of 3 years. Mr Smith was nominated by the Premier of Queensland, and is the Director-General of the Queensland Department of the Premier and Cabinet;

The Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Government Solicitor: Ms Rayne de Gruchy PSM, re-appointed by the Attorney-General and the Minister for Finance and Deregulation for a term of 2 years. Ms de Gruchy has been the CEO of the AGS since January 1999. She was awarded a Public Service Medal in 2003 for outstanding public service, particularly in managing the transition of the AGS to a government business entity;

The Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Crime Commission: Mr Alastair Milroy, re-appointed by the Governor-General for a term of one year. Mr Milroy has been the CEO of the ACC since March 2003.

The Acting Disability Discrimination Commissioner: Mr Graeme Innes AM, re-appointed by the Attorney-General for a term of 6 months. Mr Innes has performed these duties since his appointment as Human Rights Commissioner in December 2005, and was the Deputy Disability Discrimination Commissioner from 1999 to 2005;

Two members of the National Native Title Tribunal: Dr Gaye Sculthorpe (as a full-time member) and Mrs Ruth Wade (as a part-time member), each re-appointed by

the Governor-General for a term of 6 months. Both Dr Sculthorpe and Mrs Wade have been members of the Tribunal since 2000.

- (2) Vacancies which remain to be filled by Ministerial appointments within the Prime Minister and Cabinet portfolio, as at 18 February 2008, are as follows:
 - i. The Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS) Advisory Council, which advises the Director (CEO) AIFS, has up to four vacancies.
 - ii. The Australian Social Inclusion Board has ten vacancies.
- (3) As at 18 February 2008, no grants have been approved by the Prime Minister or other Ministers within the Prime Minister and Cabinet portfolio since 24 November 2007 (excluding the Department of Climate Change and the Office of the Renewable Energy Regulator who will respond separately).
- (4) Senator the Hon Nick Sherry as Minister representing the Minister for Finance and Deregulation in the Senate will respond on my behalf.

The honourable Senator is welcome to attend Estimates hearings in future and request the information sought in this Question on Notice.