

Senator Andrew Murray's Comments

This Report is tabled on Thursday 7 December 2006. It is a long report on a complex subject. I do not know whether it is a substantial or considered body of work, because in this busy last sitting week of the year I have not had time to read it, nor was I given enough time to read it.

As a member of the Committee, a copy of the Chair's Draft was sent to my email address on Tuesday 5 December 2006 at 11h41. I had seen no earlier drafts. The Committee meeting to approve the Chair's Report was held at 08h30 on Wednesday 6 December 2006, 21 hours later.

As this report is a broad reference, and was not dictated by a legislative timetable, there is nothing to have prevented it being tabled later, out-of-session.

I understand the Chair had this draft in his possession for nearly two weeks.

In what is through long precedent expected to be a considerate reasonable mature and professional approach, the process of Committee reports is to give Committee members adequate time to read the Chair's draft and propose any changes or adjustments they think necessary. The Chair may then accept or reject those suggestions. If he or she does not accept those suggestions, then adequate time should be provided to allow for minorities or additional remarks to be written.

I have no opinion on the Chair's Report because I have not had time to read it or reflect on it.

The contempt with which I and other members of the Committee have been treated reflects poorly on the Chair. It indicates an unhealthy and unwise attitude.

Opposition Senators have shown me their brief minority report, and I am sympathetic to their concerns.

Senator Andrew Murray

