



# SENATOR THE HON NICK MINCHIN

Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister

Senator Shayne Murphy  
Chair  
Senate Finance and Public Administration  
References Committee  
PARLIAMENT HOUSE ACT 2600

## **Government response to SFPARC Review of the Operation of the Order for the Production of Indexed Lists of Departmental Files**

I refer to the report of the Senate Finance and Public Administration References Committee's (SFPARC's) Review of the Operation of the Order for the Production of Indexed Lists of Departmental Files, tabled in the Senate on 5 February 1997. The Government's response to the Committee's recommendations are as follows:

### **First reference**

*The most efficient and effective way of ensuring that the information required to be tabled is available on the public record.*

### **Recommendation:**

“As an interim measure and subject to the availability of resources, it is recommended that file lists from a small number of departments which historically have received a large number of FOI requests be put on the Senate home page on the internet on a trial basis. Links to the home pages of the departments involved be established. The trial should run for six months. At the end of the trial period this

committee would assess the usage of the file lists and report to the Senate on:

- whether the practice should be extended to all file lists; and
- the most appropriate location(s) on the Internet for the lists.”

**Government response:**

This is a matter for decision by the relevant parliamentary authorities, having regard to all the costs involved.

**Fourth reference**

*Any legal or practical difficulties encountered by agencies in complying with the order.*

**Recommendation:**

“It is recommended that the order be amended to exclude the titles of files whose national security classification is Confidential, Secret or Top Secret or their equivalent.”

**Government response:**

The Government agrees.

Yours sincerely

SIGNED

30 MAY 1997

**Nick Minchin**