

The Senate

Committee of Senators' Interests

Arrangements for online publication of the
Register of Senators' Interests

Report 2/2011

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Arrangements for online publication of the Register of Senators' Interests

1.1 In Report 2/2009, the committee reported its in principle support for the publication of senators' statements of interests (Part A statements) online. In summary, the committee proposed the following arrangements:

- Statements of senators' interests will be published on the committee's website under each senator's name.
- Statements will be scanned (as pdf documents), without any watermarking or redaction.
- Notifications of alterations will be added to the relevant senator's published statement.
- Updates will be done on a weekly basis, with a notation to that effect on the website.

1.2 The arrangements are designed to provide in an online form the equivalent access as is currently provided by arrangements allowing people to inspect the register.

1.3 The committee proposed that these arrangements apply from the date new statements are required in current parliament (that is, 28 days after the first sitting day after 1 July 2011).

1.4 The committee sought feedback from senators, receiving a small number of submissions supporting the proposal and none against. Accordingly, the committee makes the recommendation in paragraph 1.5.

Recommendation

1.5 That the Senate endorse the arrangements contained in the committee's Report 2/2009 and outlined in this report for the publication online of senators' statements of interests.

1.6 If the Senate endorses these arrangements, the committee will revise the administrative arrangements for the compilation and maintenance of the register, as well as the conditions of access to the register. The committee will publish the revised arrangements on its website and produce an updated version of the Handbook it provides for the information of senators.

1.7 The feedback referred to above also supported the second aspect of the committee's 2009 report, namely the longer-term investigation of options for collecting senators' interests information by way of a more convenient online form or similar mechanism. The committee will continue to investigate these options and will report to the Senate on this matter in due course.

Senator Cory Bernardi
Chair