

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES 2016-17

Finance Portfolio
28 February 2017

Department/Agency: Finance
Outcome/Program: 2/2.1
Topic: NBN medical alarm subsidy scheme

Senator: McAllister
Question reference number: F24
Type of question: Hansard Proof, F&PA Committee, Page 53, 28 February 2017
Date set by the committee for the return of answer: Thursday, 13 April 2017

Number of pages: 2

Question:

Senator McALLISTER: Minister, are you aware of the NBN medical alarm subsidy scheme?

Senator Cormann: The which?

Senator McALLISTER: The NBN's medical alarm subsidy scheme.

Senator Cormann: In general terms. Again, you are now going to something specific that probably should be pursued with the NBN business rather than with the shareholder.

Senator McALLISTER: I am mostly interested in the decision framework here. I am not going to ask you details about the scheme. I want to understand whether the eligibility criteria for this scheme was a decision of government or whether government had input into the decision.

Mr Edge: We would have to take that on notice. I understand that there were some technology issues back a number of years ago around the NBN rollout and whether certain medical alarm devices work on the network. But I think that was a live issue probably several years ago. But if you are after specific details around that scheme and so on, we would need to take that on notice.

Senator McALLISTER: I am not asking for specific details around the scheme. I am asking about whether the minister or the department has played any role in decisions made by the NBN around the scheme.

...

Senator McALLISTER: NBN had indicated that this initiative has a funding envelope of around \$100 million. Is that a figure anyone here can confirm?

Ms Huxtable: Not that I am aware of. But we can take that on notice and see if we can find out for you.

Senator McALLISTER: Yes.

Answer:

NBN administers the Medical Alarm Subsidy Scheme (MASS). The project was approved by NBN Executive Management in consultation with the NBN Board.

NBN confirmed the estimated total cost of the subsidy scheme as being approximately \$100 million. Refer to the response to question 168 from the Communications and the Arts Portfolio Supplementary Estimates Hearing of November 2016.