

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
FAMILIES, HOUSING, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND
INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO
2010-11 Supplementary Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: 5

Question No: 181

Topic: Physical Disability Australia

Hansard Page: 21/10/10 – CA23-24

Senator Fifield asked:

Can you provide advice on the 29-page report that was submitted to FaHCSIA and the response provided? Can you also advise when and why FaHCSIA believes the matter to be resolved?

Answer:

The report submitted to the Department raised concerns about the operation of Physical Disability Australia. The Department has taken the concerns very seriously and has investigated the issues at length. Following that investigation, the former Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities, the Hon Bill Shorten MP, wrote to the author on 10 March 2010 advising that the department had taken the concerns seriously and had investigated the matter.

Since these issues were raised, Physical Disability Australia has addressed the specific concerns. Board members have undertaken governance training conducted by Robbi Williams of the Julia Farr Association. The training included a review of all internal policies of Physical Disability Australia and the organisation has subsequently set up a number of governance committees including a Governance Committee and a Financial Committee.

The Department has also worked closely with Physical Disability Australia to ensure that the organisation meets the requirements of its 2009-11 funding agreement. All deliverables of that funding agreement for the 2009-10 financial year were finalised to the Department's satisfaction by 21 September 2010.