

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates 26 May-6 June 2014

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Registrar of Indigenous Corporations

Outcome/Program: Registrar of Indigenous Corporations

Topic: Adnyamathanha Traditional Lands Association – trust arrangement

Senator: Senator Nick Xenophon

Question reference number: 131

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Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 11 July 2014

Number of pages: 2

Question:

Senator XENOPHON: Minister, you have heard the interchange in relation to this. The complaint I have had in relation to the Adnyamathanha Traditional Lands Association is that my constituents feel that they cannot get an account of where the money has gone—we are talking about millions of dollars—because of the trust arrangement, which Mr Beven says in some circumstances ORIC does not have authority over. Is that something that the government will look at from a policy perspective? It seems to me to be a loophole.

Senator Scullion: From what I have heard today, I generally do not have too many concerns. As you would be aware, I have sat on your side of the table for a very long time in this place. I shared the same concerns, I have to say. Often, as other people around the table would have, I have Aboriginal communities or corporations registered to ORIC come to me as a senator and they would expose their side of the story. I would bring it to estimates and provide that to Mr Beven. As has happened today, I think he has given you a comprehensive assessment and a response to all of those matters. On this particular area, I will seek a further brief from Mr Beven. If there is further information that I can provide you on that particular matter about the extent of the powers of ORIC, I will. I think there is no suggestion that ORIC has not gone far enough. But, as you indicated—

Senator XENOPHON: It does not seem to have the statutory powers.

Senator Scullion: As to whether it has particular statutory powers and the extent of that, I will seek a brief on that and I will provide you with a comprehensive answer in a brief.

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Answer:

A separate brief will be provided by the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations to Minister Scullion on this matter.