

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications

Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice

Additional Estimates Hearings February 2014

Communications Portfolio

NBN Co Limited

Question No: 77

Program No. NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: Pg 62-63 (25/2/14)

Topic: November Estimates QoN 207

Senator Conroy asked:

Dr Switkowski: As I have just discovered, the question had eight parts and we have answered it in half a dozen lines. In the last line, it makes reference to the fact that it would require a diversion of resources. I think Senator Conroy is linking that line to a particular part of whatever one of those eight questions is. That may or may not be legitimate. We cannot tell until we take the time to have a look at it. I think Senator Conroy is being a touch mischievous.

Senator Conroy: I am not being a touch mischievous. Can you produce that report for the Senate committee now? You know exactly which report I am talking about. We have had a discussion.

Senator Fifield: I think that question will be taken on notice, Senator Conroy.

CHAIR: He said he would look at it, Senator Conroy.

Senator Fifield: Dr Switkowski indicated that he would appreciate the opportunity to study the full set of questions.

Senator Conroy: If Dr Switkowski wants to say that, that is fine, but I did not hear him say that. Let him answer for himself.

Dr Switkowski: I will take that on notice.

Senator Conroy: That is two estimates in a row you have taken it on notice, just so we are clear.

Dr Switkowski: No. We have answered—

Senator Conroy: It was put on notice last time. I am asking about the answer.

Dr Switkowski: But you have the answer in front of you.

Senator Conroy: But we do not have the document in front of us. That is the actual point. I am happy that you have taken it on notice. I will move on. I want to ask you about the answer you gave to question on notice 207. Here your answer states:

Please refer to answer to Question 205.

Does question 207 ask for any information about FSAMs?

Dr Switkowski: This asked us for data for about a dozen different dates and premises that had build instructions being issued. So it is a very detailed question about the nature of the construction build.

Senator Conroy: That is the point of putting questions on notice. They can be detailed so you can give us detailed answers.

CHAIR: Senator Conroy, please let them answer.

Senator Conroy: I will come to my question. I am just drawing your attention to it so you could have a quick look at it. The reason given for providing no additional information in relation to question 205 was that information is not provided at FSAM level. What I am confused about is how an answer to question on notice 205 can be an answer to a question that had not been asked about FSAMs. You actually refer me to a question that has nothing to do with the question I actually asked you. It is a completely different question that I ask and you say, 'Go and look at 205.'

Dr Switkowski: I will have to reflect on that and come back to you.

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Answer:

The answer to QoN 205 referred to the provision of highly detailed information that was not covered in the information currently being provided in the weekly statistics. Likewise, QoN 207 asked for detailed information that was not currently being provided in the weekly statistics, thus the referral to QoN 205.