

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Supplementary Budget Estimates 2013-2014**

Outcome 3 - Higher Education, Research & International

Department of Education Question No. ED0235_14

Senator Rhiannon asked on 20 November 2013, Hansard page 122

Question

Commission of audit - HELP securitisation

Senator RHIANNON: In what way are you involved with the process currently being undertaken by the commission of audit and were you notified prior to any public reporting of the fact that the commission of audit intended to look at that question of HELP securitisation? Mr Griew: The terms of reference of the commission of audit have been public and they encourage the commission of audit to look at a wide range of areas. The minister has been clear that that includes examination, among other things, of options relating to the HELP debt. Senator RHIANNON: Were you notified beforehand? Mr Griew: We certainly have had discussions in the minister's office with him and his staff about that issue. Senator RHIANNON: Beforehand? pg 123 Mr Griew: To be honest I cannot recall. There are a wide range of discussions that you have with the minister's office about all manner of potential policy options. Senator RHIANNON: Can you take on notice the question of whether you were informed beforehand. Ms Paul: Sure. Mr Griew: Sure.

Answer

The Department was not advised that the National Commission of Audit would examine HELP debt securitisation prior to the article entitled 'Libs to clear \$23b HECS debt' appearing in The West Australian newspaper on 16 October 2013.