

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS  
ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT

**Group 3**

**Output 1.6**

**Question No. 62**

**Senator Brandis asked the following question at the hearing on 24 May 2012:**

**Senator BRANDIS:** I understand that. I do not have any difficulty in accepting that other ministers or departments would have been involved in the development of a response but I am very surprised, first of all, that Mr Brimble was not afforded the courtesy of an acknowledgement by the Attorney-General and, secondly, that whatever response developed within the bowels of the government has taken so long. Which ministers or departments do you get to hear from?

**Mr Wilkins:** I am not entirely sure actually.

**Senator BRANDIS:** Can you find out please? You might take that on notice.

**Mr Wilkins:** I might take that on notice.

**Senator BRANDIS:** I can see you are a little taken by surprise by this. I would like to know which ministers—and I know there was a cabinet reshuffle in December and maybe that has prolonged things—have been engaged in the process which is described in the letter from Alex Anderson of 9 December 2011. I would like to know whether the new Attorney-General, Ms Roxon, has addressed her mind to the matter. We know that Mr McClelland did because we are told that in the letter of 9 December. I would like to know which ministers or departments the Attorney-General's Department, as the lead agency, is still waiting to hear from. I would like an indication or an estimate from you as to how much longer we can expect it to be for the Australian government to develop its response to the New South Wales coroner's recommendation?

**Mr Wilkins:** Let me take that on notice because I cannot answer that now.

**The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:**

The Government response to the recommendations of the New South Wales Coroner following the inquest into the death of Ms Dianne Brimble was released on 22 June 2012 and tabled in Parliament on 25 June 2012.

In developing a response to the Coroner's recommendations, the Attorney-General's Department gave detailed consideration to the recommendations and sought input and advice from other Commonwealth agencies with responsibility for, and expertise in, matters relating to the maritime sector. This includes the Australian Federal Police, the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Department of Infrastructure and Transport, the Office for Transport Security, the Australian Maritime Safety Authority, the Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism, the Department of Health and Ageing, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and the Department of Defence.