



Opening statement

The ACNC Commissioner, Dr Gary Johns, has asked me to read the following statement on his behalf:

I apologise to the Committee for being unable to attend today's hearing. I trust my colleague, acting Assistant Commissioner Catherine Willis, will be able to answer your questions regarding the operations of the ACNC.

If there are any issues that you would like to raise me with directly, Ms Willis can take these questions on notice and I will respond in writing.

I am unable to attend the hearing today as I am in Wellington to meet with New Zealand's charity regulator and represent the ACNC at the two-day Charity Law Association of Australia and New Zealand Conference. The ACNC has strong relationship with CLAANZ – a peak body that brings together charity law experts in both Australia and New Zealand.

The conference organisers approached the ACNC in September 2018 to invite representatives from the ACNC to attend the 2019 conference in Wellington. As Commissioner I committed to representing the ACNC. In September 2018 when the ACNC was approached by CLAANZ I was unaware of the change to the Senate Budget Estimates hearing dates from May to April.

I do however greatly respect the Committee and the Senate Estimates process. It is important that senior public servants are held to account by the Committee, who of course represent the community.

Again, I apologise for being unable to attend and look forward to providing written responses to your questions.

The Hon Dr Gary Johns

ACNC Commissioner