



SENATOR THE HON MATHIAS CORMANN

Minister for Finance

Leader of the Government in the Senate

Senator James Paterson
Chair
Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Chair

I write to you in my capacity as the Minister representing the Prime Minister at the Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee.

I refer to a question asked by Senator Wong during the 2018-19 Budget Estimates hearings on Tuesday 22 May 2018 pertaining to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's (the Department) decision in response to a request under the *Freedom of Information Act 1984* (FOI Act).

The Department advises it received a request under the FOI Act on 27 January 2018, referred to as _____ (the request). Four documents were identified as relevant to the terms of the request and two of the documents were released in full. Senator Wong requested copies of the two documents which the Department found were exempt from release.

It would not be in the public interest to disclose the content of those documents. The documents contain information the disclosure of which would, or might reasonably be expected to:

- prejudice the impartial adjudication of a particular case; and
- be an unreasonable invasion of an individual's privacy.

The disclosure of the information contained in the documents would cause specific harm to the public interest by:

- diminishing the opportunity for the matter, i.e the subject of the communication received and referred by the Department, to be considered fairly and impartially
- infringing privacy to the extent that it may negatively affect the reputation of particular individuals; and

- discouraging the willingness of individuals to communicate information to the Department in the future.

On that basis, I claim public interest immunity over the contents of the two documents requested.

Kind regards _

Mathias Cormann
Minister for Finance

22 May 2018