

Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee

Public Hearing – 25 July 2023

ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Social Services

Topic: Inquiry into current and proposed sexual consent laws in Australia

Question reference number: IQ23-000065

Question asked by: Paul Scarr

Type of Question: Spoken. **Hansard Page:** 57

Date set by the Committee for the return of answer: 15 August 2023

Question:

CHAIR: Well, I understand what you're saying in that the money was paid to the third party, and the third party provided deliverables to Universities Australia. But from the Australian taxpayer's perspective, Universities Australia entered into an agreement with the Commonwealth government to provide a campaign. They went out and used Commonwealth funds to pay a third-party service provider, and then Universities Australia decided not to proceed with the campaign. On that basis, didn't the Commonwealth have an opportunity a legal right, potentially under the terms of the agreement to say to Universities Australia: 'Well, you contracted the third party and now you've decided not to proceed with the campaign. That's your decision, but please recompense us the funds which we the Commonwealth provided to you, because those funds are being thrown away because you've chosen not to engage in the campaign'?

Ms Doherty: Yes. Thank you. Sorry—I'd misunderstood. Again, I couldn't say for sure whether that option was discussed. I think I can reflect that there was an amount of developmental research that informed the campaign products, and, to the extent possible, that was tapped into in the development of the Good Practice Guide. So, while the campaign didn't proceed in the original format, the learnings through that development have been able to be reflected in the Good Practice Guide in terms of things like the importance of setting-based engagement, the ways that students like to receive information. While it was a different product in the end, it was informed by that early piece of work.

CHAIR: And I have one final question before we adjourn. Is the agreement with Universities Australia public?

Ms Doherty: I think it should be on GrantConnect, yes.

CHAIR: Could I ask you to, for ease of reference, provide a copy to the committee, on notice?

Ms Doherty: Yes.

Answer:

Details of the arrangement with UA are available on GrantConnect at <https://www.grants.gov.au/Ga/Show/7d62494d-2daa-4ca5-894a-b903a9f3c921>