

Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade

Review of the Defence Annual Report 2015-16 – 17 February 2017

ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Defence

Topic: Women – Removal of Gender Restrictions from ADF Combat Role Employment Categories – Progress

Question reference number: 13

Senator: Claydon

Type of question: asked on Friday, 17 February 2017, Hansard page 54

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 14 March 2017

Question:

Ms CLAYDON: Okay. You can add that to the list of other questions on notice. Have you got any sense of how the removal of the gender restrictions from the ADF combat role employment categories is progressing, where it is sitting after five years—I think it is now—and how the target is being met?

RADM Wolski: I can talk quickly about some of the broad numbers of women in the services and how the female participation rate is increasing across the services, and then we can talk particularly about the removal of the restrictions, which of course has been in place now for about 18 months.

Ms CLAYDON: Thank you for correcting my question.

Answer:

The removal of restrictions from Australian Defence Force combat role employment categories was finalised in 2016. Direct recruitment (ab inito) of women into these categories officially opened for enlistments from January 2016.

There was no target for women serving in combat roles – the intent has always been to provide the opportunity for women who wish to apply for these roles to do so.