

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES 2016-17

Finance Portfolio
28 February 2017

Department/Agency: Finance

Outcome/Program: 2/2.1

Topic: Appointment of Jamie Briggs to Moorebank board

Senator: Kitching

Question reference number: F22

Type of question: Hansard Proof, F&PA Committee, Pages 49 to 51, 28 February 2017

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: Thursday, 13 April 2017

Number of pages: 2

Question:

Senator Cormann: When we came into government, Moorebank had a very large and very unwieldy board. At the request of the chair, Dr Kerry Schott, after coming into government, we did not fill all of the positions that had been made available on the board. I can provide on notice how many people were on the board when we came in. I think it went down to about five or six. So there were a number of vacant positions. Towards the end of last year, I decided to recommend to the cabinet that we appoint Jamie Briggs to one of the vacancies.

Senator KITCHING: Of course. Did Mr Briggs approach you? He would have known you were the decision-maker. Did he approach you for the role, or was he approached?

Senator Cormann: No. I approached him.

Senator KITCHING: When did you do that?

Senator Cormann: I have to take that on notice.

...

Senator Cormann: You are making a very inaccurate assertion there. I did say, and that is accurate, that I initiated the approach to Mr Briggs. But, of course, he had to supply the necessary paperwork. He had to sign the necessary forms. That was not managed by me, I have to say. That was managed, as you would expect, through a departmental process. The appropriate paperwork and the appropriate checks and balances were gone through as this was put to the cabinet.

...

Senator KITCHING: I will ask you, or perhaps one of the deputy secretaries may know, for a full list. What other paperwork did he have to be aware of? I am thinking of codes of conduct, policy documents et cetera.

Senator Cormann: If you are now going to his induction as a director on a government business enterprise, I am very happy to provide you on notice with the induction material for directors both as they apply generally to directors on government business enterprises—

Senator KITCHING: That would be great. Thank you.

...

Senator KITCHING: Is the director's fee \$60,000?

Senator Cormann: I will take that on notice. It is published on the Remuneration Tribunal website, so it is a matter of public record. Whatever is listed there is what it is.

...

Senator KITCHING: How long was it between when he accepted the role and when the announcement was made?

Senator Cormann: The announcement would have been made on the spot because he could only accept the role after the cabinet decided. I can get you the exact dates. It would be pretty well about the same time because he can only accept the position after the cabinet has decided to offer it to him.

...

Senator KITCHING: Was there a reason the announcement was made on 16 December?

Senator Cormann: Because that would have coincided with the cabinet meeting at which the decision was made. From memory, it might have been the last cabinet meeting before we went to the Christmas break, but I will check that. Essentially, as soon as a decision was made, it was announced.

Senator KITCHING: Was the announcement circulated to the media?

Senator Cormann: I would have to take that on notice. I do not get involved in the logistics at that level. You might get involved in logistics at that level. I do not.

Senator KITCHING: There was a suggestion in a newspaper article that the announcement was not circulated.

Senator Cormann: Well, I have read that suggestion. I will take that on notice and see what we can provide you with on notice.

Senator KITCHING: So you will see what you can provide?

Senator Cormann: Yes.

Answer:

Upon the election of the Government in 2013 there were nine members of the Moorebank Intermodal Company (MIC) Board. There are currently six members on the Board and three vacancies.

Mr Briggs was appointed to the Moorebank Intermodal Company (MIC) Board on 13 December 2016.

Shareholder Ministers wrote to Mr Briggs on 13 December 2016 to advise him of his successful appointment. This letter identified documentation relevant for a member of the MIC Board, including the *Corporations Act 2001*, the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*, *Resource Management Guide No. 126 – Government Business Enterprise Governance and Oversight Guidelines*, and MIC's *Commercial Freedoms Framework*. The letter also advised Mr Briggs that MIC would provide further information relating to his role and responsibilities during his induction and enclosed a copy of the signed instrument of appointment.

Prior to his appointment to the MIC Board, Mr Briggs provided his CV and a Private Interests Declaration to the Office of the Minister for Finance.

Minister Cormann issued a media release announcing the appointment of Mr Briggs to the MIC Board on 16 December 2016.

Director's fees for MIC Board Members are determined by the Remuneration Tribunal, and are currently \$56,150 per annum.