

**SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS  
ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S PORTFOLIO**

**Program: 1.1 AGD Operating Expenses - Civil Justice and Legal Services**

**Question No. SBE16/128**

**Senator Pratt asked the following question at the hearing on 12 December 2016:**

**Questions for Senator Brandis**

1. The ATO have given evidence to the 'Bell Inquiry' that a request was made on or before 5 June from your office of the Attorney General for a briefing from the ATO regarding the introduction of the Bell legislation.
  - a. What date was that request made?
  - b. Did the Attorney-General make that request personally?
  - c. If the Attorney-General did not make that request personally, who made the request?
  - d. When the Attorney-General was informed that a request for a briefing from the ATO has been made?
2. The ATO have given evidence to the 'Bell Inquiry' that they had provided ministers with further written and verbal updates on the Western Australian government's proposed legislation in June, July and August 2015.
  - a. Did the ATO provide those verbal and written updates to the Attorney-General and/or his office?
  - b. What date/s were those updated provided.
  - c. Were they written or verbal?
3. Did the Attorney-General receive any briefing, either from his office, the AGD or any other agency, about the Bell matter prior to the 3 March 2016?
4. On which date did the ATO seek advice from the Australian Government Solicitor about the Western Australian "Bell" legislation.
5. Did the Attorney-General receive a briefing from his office or department around 28 January 2016 on the question of whether the Commonwealth should intervene in the Bell proceedings?
6. Did you the Attorney General speak to the Department prior to 3 March about potentially intervening in this High Court matter?

**The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:**

1.
  - a. See answer to question SBE16/114.
  - b. No.
  - c. The Office of the Attorney-General.
  - d. This sentence is not a question.
2. See answer to question SBE16/114.
3. No.
4. This question should be directed to the ATO.
5. See answer to question SBE16/116.
6. No.