

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

Program: General

Question No. SBE16/129

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

Question for the department

1. The Government's statement of ministerial standards states:

Statement of Ministerial Standards, 1.3(iii):

Ministers must accept accountability for the exercise of the powers and functions of their office – that is, to ensure that their conduct, representations and decisions as Ministers, and the conduct, representations and decisions of those who act as their delegates or on their behalf – are open to public scrutiny and explanation.

Does Senator Brandis' approach to FOI law live up to this standard?

Questions for Senator Brandis

2. Is there any basis on which to assume that the cost of complying with the FOI request for Brandis' diary that led to a hearing of the Full Court of the Federal Court would have been less than the cost of the case?

3. We are nearly four months now after that ruling of the Full Court of the Federal Court. What is the current status of the order being processed?

4. Is complying with the request as ordered, in fact, interfering with the work of the Attorney-General as was originally argued?

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

1. Questions about the Statement of Ministerial Standards should be directed to the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

2. It is not possible to respond as this question is hypothetical.

3. The matter is being addressed within available resources.

4. The matter is being addressed within available resources.