

Records of Telephone Conversations

The two conversations between officials of the Department of Human Services and the Department of Finance, where records were kept, follow:

- A telephone conversation on the morning of 14 May 2014:
 - confirming the administrative arrangements being considered and the process for the scoping study including aspects related to:
 - likely timings of phases of the scoping study
 - the use of specialist advisers
 - governance arrangements
 - likely meetings with the Australian Hearing Board and senior executive
 - a focus on business as usual by Australian Hearing during this process

- A telephone conversation on the morning of 3 June 2014:
 - confirming that the Terms of Reference (ToR) are still in draft form only
 - requesting that any questions at Senate Estimates about the ToR be referred to the Department of Finance
 - indicating that public consultation as part of scoping study will occur, although this would traditionally include industry only
 - reporting that the Minister for Finance had not yet seen the draft ToR
 - confirming that the Department of Finance are awaiting Department of Health comments on the ToR
 - advising that the Department of Finance would not normally show the draft ToR to the agencies that are the subject of the scoping study, and that Australian Hearing would likely get the final draft once it has been signed off by the Minister for Finance
 - noting that a range of hearing services policy issues were raised by Senator Siewert during the Department of Health's recent appearance at Senate Estimates
 - indicating a willingness to consider the Department of Human Services having a role in the selection of the Adviser
 - highlighting that the Adviser may provide advice on multiple scoping studies
 - seeking support from the Department of Human Services Legal Services to review standard contracts and tender documentation, if Finance is unable to access usual private sector advice.