

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

BUDGET ESTIMATES – 5-6 JUNE 2014 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Human Services

Topic: Better Futures, Local Solutions – Community Innovation through Collaboration measure

Question reference number: HS 45

Senator: Cameron

Type of question: Hansard page 34, 6 June 2014

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 25 July 2014

Number of pages: 1

Question:

Senator CAMERON: Can you also provide all correspondence since the budget deliberations commenced. I do not know what the date would be, but you would know, when the minister started looking at budget responses for the department. So that would be within that budget lead-up period. Could you provide all correspondence from the department to the minister on this issue, from the minister back to the department on this issue, and all correspondence from the Better Futures, Local Solutions organisations to the department.

Ms Campbell: We will take that on notice.

Answer:

The department has provided advice to the Minister on this issue. Information on briefing provided to the Minister is not usually made publically available in order to maintain the department's ability to properly and effectively brief Ministers.

There is a substantial amount of correspondence (including letters and emails) between the department and the Local Solutions Fund host organisations on this issue. This correspondence includes commercially sensitive information and material disclosed to the department in confidence. In order to identify relevant documentation, it would be necessary to undertake searches of both hard copy files and electronic records. This would require the diversion of staff from other operations. Accordingly, the departmental resources involved in collating and preparing the documentation would be a substantial and unreasonable diversion of resources.