

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO**  
**2013-14 Supplementary Estimates Hearings**

**Outcome Number:** Cross Outcome - Across Programs

**Question No:** 287

**Topic:** Grants

**Hansard Page:** Written

**Senator Moore** asked:

Since the election has there been any change to the department's discretionary grants program assessment processes and decision making arrangements? Where did the initiative to make these changes come from - was it from the department to the minister, from the minister, or his staff, to the department? Or did it come from the Prime Minister or his office via Prime Minister and Cabinet?

**Answer:**

The Government is assessing all grant spending for consistency with Government priorities and commitments. There is a requirement for additional approval by the Minister for Finance to ensure that assessment can take place, before any relevant grant spending can proceed.

This requirement applies to discretionary grant spending only and excludes entitlement based programs such as pension entitlements and Medicare entitlements. It also excludes payments where contracts/agreements are already in place (i.e. have been signed).

Other than the review of discretionary spending, described above, there has been no change to the assessment and decision making processes for discretionary grants.