

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications

Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice

Additional Estimates Hearings February 2015

Communications Portfolio

Australian Communications and Media Authority

Question No: 23

Program No. Australian Communications and Media Authority

Hansard Ref: 24/2/2014 page 45

Topic: Complaints numbers

Senator Urquhart asked:

Senator URQUHART: Do you have statistics on how many complaints you get? If you need to take it on notice, do so.

Ms McNeill: Perhaps I will need to take it on notice, but may I just ask whether the complaints you are inquiring about are complaints about cyberbullying or complaints about other things? We are one of those organisations that receive very many complaints from all sorts of people about all sorts of things.

Senator URQUHART: It is more about online bullying.

Ms McNeill: I will take the question on notice, but I think that we will not have detailed information about that.

Answer:

The Australian Communications and Media Authority (the ACMA) has no legislated role receiving or investigating complaints about cyberbullying. Accordingly, it does not keep statistics on cyberbullying complaints.

However, two of its roles do result in some cyberbullying related contacts from members of the public.

The ACMA's Cybersmart program provides information and educational resources for schools, families and young people through the Cybersmart website some of which deals with cyberbullying. The availability of this material means that the ACMA receives some contacts in relation to cyberbullying.

In addition, under Schedules 5 and 7 of the Broadcasting Services Act 1992, the ACMA operates a complaints-based scheme for offensive and illegal online content. In assessing content under Schedules 5 and 7, the ACMA must apply the criteria set out in the National Classification Scheme, which also applies to films, publications and computer games. In 2014, the ACMA received approximately 30 enquires relating to cyberbullying content via this complaints mechanism.