

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee
Answers to questions on notice
Environment portfolio

Question No: 98
Hearing: Additional Estimates
Outcome: Corporate
Programme: Policy Analysis and Implementation (PAAI)
Topic: Register of Environmental Organisations
Hansard Page: 9-10
Question Date: 23 February 2015
Question Type: Spoken

Senator Canavan asked:

Senator CANAVAN: Just to clarify, I could set up an organisation with 50 members, achieve accreditation and have another organisation with exactly the same 50 members with a different name and different constitution and still qualify. There are no restrictions on the overlap of membership. That is my understanding, but can you confirm that?

Dr Kennedy: I would say that I do not know of any examples like that.

Senator CANAVAN: I know that. That is just to put it in stark relief.

Dr Kennedy: We do not tend to get into hypotheticals, but I will confirm whether that is a plausible scenario. It is a reasonable point to make that there would be reasonable overlaps across some of the organisations you see among the over 500 organisations listed on the register of environmental organisations.

Answer:

There is no provision in the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997* to preclude people being part of different organisations for similar purposes. Bodies corporate and co-operative societies are considered to be entities distinct from the individual members of the organisation.