

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee**

Answers to questions on notice
Environment and Energy portfolio

Question No: 95
Hearing: Additional Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 2
Program: Domestic Emissions Reduction Division (DERD)
Topic: Department policy – response to alternate beliefs
Hansard Page: 10 and 11
Question Date: 27 February 2017
Question Type: Spoken

Senator Roberts asked:

Senator ROBERTS: Yes, I have. What is the department's policy when responding to allegations that the belief is wrong?

Dr de Brouwer: I think we always take every person's statement seriously, so we listen to people and we would look to then assess that against what we see to be the evidence, drawing from a wide body of knowledge. I think we always try to listen to people with respect and, if people have different views, we engage on those views.

Senator ROBERTS: Can you tell me what respect would look like?

Dr de Brouwer: I think it is a conversation. If people want to challenge or say that this is not right then we would listen to what they say and then look at that against what we understand to be the science.

Senator ROBERTS: So you would scrutinise what they have to say?

Dr de Brouwer: Yes.

Senator ROBERTS: Can the department show any evidence of having engaged constructively with those who question the belief? I understand that a number of people have.

Dr de Brouwer: I think if people ask us we talk about it or we provide the material that we are drawing on for our assessments.

Senator ROBERTS: Can you give me the evidence showing that you have done that?

Dr de Brouwer: I will have to take that on notice.

Senator ROBERTS: That is fine.

Answer:

Providing information to the Australian public is a core part of the department's business.

The Australian Government takes its primary advice on climate science from the Bureau of Meteorology and CSIRO. This advice aligns with information provided by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and other respected national and international organisations.

Since 2016, the Minister and the Department has provided a written response to over 750 pieces of correspondence relating to climate change.

The Department will continue to welcome correspondence and engage constructively with individuals and the community on climate change.