

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications**  
**Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice**  
**Budget Estimates Hearings May 2014**  
**Communications Portfolio**  
**Department of Communications**

**Question No: 547**

**Program No. 1.1**

**Hansard Ref: In Writing**

**Topic: Independent cost-benefit analysis and review of regulation**

**Senator Urquhart asked:**

In reference to the *Independent cost-benefit analysis and review of regulation*:

a. At the hearing the Secretary said:

“Your line of questioning sounds to me a lot like a submission on the methodology, which is welcome. That was the purpose of its publication. I encourage, as was the intent in publishing it, all interested parties to make submissions along the lines that you are outlining.”

The Department website states:

“The panel wants to ensure that its cost-benefit analysis (CBA) has a sound theoretical basis and that it informs stakeholders about the analytical framework it is using (in the interests of furthering public information and discussion about its processes). So the panel has released an Analytical Framework that provides conceptual guidance for its CBA of the national broadband network.”

Does the Department contend that the phrase “in the interests of furthering public information and discussion about its processes” means “encourage...interested parties to make submissions”??

**Answer:**

(a) The panel has conducted its work in the most transparent way possible, including by releasing papers and seeking views from a range of stakeholders.

Part of this transparency is being open about how the cost-benefit analysis is being undertaken, which was the purpose of releasing the analytical framework. As noted on the website the purpose was not just to inform about the framework being used but also to further discussion, including the opportunity for interested stakeholders to submit their views to the panel.