

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications**

**Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice**

**Budget Estimates Hearings May 2015**

**Communications Portfolio**

**Department of Communications**

**Question No: 16**

**Program No. 1.1**

**Hansard Ref: Written, 3/6/2015**

**Topic: NBN Co's headline forecasts**

**Senator Urquhart, Anne asked:**

1. During the budget estimates hearing in May 2015, when asked if he would disclose NBN Co's headline forecasts—specifically NBN Co's headline cost, revenue and rollout forecasts—Mr Bill Morrow said “it would be my choice not to.” Later in the hearing, the following exchange took place:

*Senator CONROY: You have made it clear, Mr Morrow. You said, 'Even if I was not directed by the minister I still would not provide this information.'*

*Mr Morrow: To the general public. Of course there is certain information that is going to change so, no, I would not provide that just generally to the public. I can tell you I have run publicly traded companies and privately owned companies and I have never released that kind of information to the general public.*

- a) What headline forecasts would the Department be expected to provide to the Parliament were NBN Co to be operating as a program of the Department rather than as an incorporated entity?
- b) Given that NBN Co has not yet raised any debt finance in its own right, nor indicated it has any current plan to do so, is there any reason why its forecasts should be less transparent than a Department's?

**Answer:**

(a) and (b):

NBN Co Ltd is not a program of the Department. NBN Co Ltd is a Government Business Enterprise (GBE) incorporated under the *Corporations Act 2001*. It operates under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*. The Department is satisfied that NBN Co is meeting the obligations of all the applicable legislation.