

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: 3

Program No. 1.1

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Topic: ACMA Review

Senator Urquhart, Anne asked:

Senator URQUHART: I just want to talk about the ACMA review. I understand that the department is currently undertaking an internal review of the ACMA; is this correct?

Mr Clarke: The government has not yet announced its intentions with regard to any review of the ACMA, so I would prefer to take that on notice, if I could.

Senator URQUHART: You say 'not yet announced'. That almost implies that there will be one?

Mr Clarke: It is well understood that the ACMA Act has now been in force for nearly 10 years and it would be a reasonable assumption that it would be timely to have a look at how that might be updated to reflect the current more digital environment, but it really is a matter for the government to make any announcements in that regard.

Senator URQUHART: If there was a review, what would it be about; what would be the sorts of things we would be looking for?...

Senator URQUHART: ...When could we expect any public announcements about the review; what is the process from here, basically?

Mr Clarke: It is a matter for the government.

Senator URQUHART: Senator Fifield, do you have anything that you might want to add?

Senator Fifield: As the Minister representing the Minister for Communications, I cannot add to what the secretary has said. If you would like us—

Senator URQUHART: You cannot throw any light on that?

Senator Fifield: As someone who is not intimately involved day to day in the moving forward of issues in the Communications portfolio, no, I cannot.

Senator URQUHART: But you are here representing the minister.

Senator Fifield: I am here representing the minister, but I am not the minister. It is a subtle distinction, which I am sure you will appreciate.

Senator URQUHART: I have identified that very strongly. Are you able to take that on notice and provide some—

Senator Fifield: Absolutely and with delight.

Answer:

A review of the Australian Communications and Media Authority was announced on 12 June 2015 by the Minister for Communications, the Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP. Information about the review, including the terms of reference, is available from the Department's website at <https://www.communications.gov.au/what-we-do/television/media/acma-review>