

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

Question No: 8
Hearing: Budget Estimates
Outcome: Outcome
Programme: Policy Analysis and Implementation (PAAI)
Topic: Register of Environment Organisations
Hansard Page: 11
Question Date: 25 May 2015
Question Type: Spoken

Senator Canavan asked:

Dr Kennedy: They do have those powers. We can refer a matter that is arising under the Register of Environmental Organisations where an organisation, we feel, may not be behaving in line with any number of laws, and it is up to them whether they use those powers to investigate. But they do have those powers.

Senator CANAVAN: Finally, to be clear, did you see the GetUp! board papers that were referred to in The Australian?

Dr Kennedy: I will have to take that on notice.

Senator CANAVAN: I think you took it on notice last time, but you have not explicitly answered that question.

Dr Kennedy: I do not know off the top of my head whether we sought through the Friends of the Earth or asked them for comment on those board papers, but we did not communicate directly with GetUp!

Senator CANAVAN: I ask you again to take on notice whether you saw those board papers. I do not think that is going to any great secrecy. It goes to the board papers themselves and whether or not you were able to examine them, as presumably The Australian was able to.

Dr Kennedy: As public documents, and whether we looked at them through the course of the investigation.

Senator CANAVAN: I do not think they were public documents, but certainly the journalist at The Australian seemed to have access to them.

Dr Kennedy: Okay. I will take that on notice.

Answer:

The Department neither saw nor sought the board paper referred to in the press as we only regulate those entities on the Register of Environmental Organisations.