

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

Question No: 5

Program No. 1.1

Hansard Ref: Page 10, 25 November 2014

Topic: Mr Peter Lewis – date of appointment as CFO Southern Cross Media

Senator SINGH asked:

Senator SINGH: Was Mr Lewis the chief finance officer of Southern Cross Media at the time of him becoming an applicant?

Ms O'Loughlin: I would have to check the dates.

Mr Clarke: No, he was not. He had left his position with that free-to-air broadcaster before he was engaged by the department to assist us with the efficiency review, so I can say with confidence that he was not at that time, since that was earlier.

Senator SINGH: What was the date that he ceased being—

Mr Clarke: I have been reminded that I am mixing my broadcasters. He was, of course, the CFO at Channel 7, and left that position before we engaged him to assist us with the efficiency study. I am clear on that. You are asking me about a different appointment that he had—my apologies. I need to withdraw my answer and take it on notice as to what other positions he may have held at the time that the ABC and SBS board positions were being advertised.

Senator Birmingham: Which appointment were you asking about?

Senator SINGH: I was asking about his role as the chief finance officer of Southern Cross Media, which is another commercial broadcaster.

Mr Clarke: It is a different commercial broadcasting appointment. Apologies for my false answer before. We would need to take that on notice. We do not have the dates of that commercial appointment in front of us.

Answer:

On 1 May 2014, Southern Cross Media Group issued a media release and statement to the Australian Stock Exchange announcing the appointment of Mr Lewis to the position of Chief Financial Officer, commencing 16 June 2014. The Department can confirm that Mr Lewis submitted his application to Amanda O'Rourke Executive Search before this announcement.