

Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Industry Portfolio
Budget Estimates Hearing 2014-15
2-3 June 2014

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: Questacon

TOPIC: National Science Week Grants Briefing

REFERENCE: Question on Notice (Hansard, 2 June 2014, page 115)

QUESTION No.: BI-51

Senator KIM CARR: Minister, have you been able to establish why it took two months for the grants that were approved on 13 December to be announced? I would not answer that question, Professor, if I were you.

Senator Ronaldson: I presume the minister had a good reason for doing so. I am not aware of the reason. It was a decision made by the minister.

Senator KIM CARR: That is right. They got clogged in the minister's office, didn't they?

Senator Ronaldson: You are making that suggestion, Senator.

Senator KIM CARR: I am.

Senator Ronaldson: I assume that the minister announced them when he was ready to do so.

Senator KIM CARR: Yes, after a question I asked you in the Senate. It occurred just after that.

Senator Ronaldson: With the greatest respect to you, Senator Carr, I am not entirely convinced that your questions in the Senate determine what actions the minister takes.

Senator KIM CARR: Yes, I am sure they would have that impact; I accept that. Can you tell me when the briefs actually got to the minister's office, Secretary?

Ms Beauchamp: I would have to take that on notice.

Senator KIM CARR: I understand that the brief did not get into the minister's office until February. Would that be right? Professor Durant, when did you send the briefs across to the department?

Prof. Durant: I will take that on notice. I do not have the details here.

Senator KIM CARR: I just want to get the train—

Prof. Durant: I think you are probably in the right ballpark, but let me get the exact details.

Senator KIM CARR: Why does it take so long for the grants briefs to move through the department in that way?

Ms Beauchamp: Senator, I will take that on notice.

ANSWER

1. Please refer to PQoN-343 for information on the date when the brief on the successful *National Science Week* 2014 grants was made available to the Minister's Office.
2. The final version of the "for information" brief containing the media release was sent to the department for forwarding onto the Minister's Office on 5 February 2014.
3. As outlined in the response to the PQoN-343, the assessment of the grant applications was completed on 13 December 2013. Following approval of the recommended list of successful applicants, both successful and unsuccessful applicants were then requested to be notified and process of the contract negotiation with successful applicants commenced. The notification of both successful and unsuccessful applicants was made on schedule and in line with the previous years' notification schedule.

In parallel the process the "for information" brief on *National Science Week* 2014 grants containing media release was provided to the Minister's Office in February 2014.