

Senate Committee: Education and Employment

**QUESTION ON NOTICE
Additional Estimates 2016 - 2017**

Outcome: Skills and Training

Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ17-000023

Senator Cameron, Doug asked on 01 March 2017, Proof Hansard page 18

Problems with MHM

Question

Senator CAMERON: But ASQA is one aspect. You have overarching responsibility. This is your responsibility for a company that is under police investigation, that has left students stranded and has received \$10.4 million in taxpayer funding—\$8 million, I think you said, last year. What have you done about it?

Senator Birmingham: Firstly, in terms of 'overarching', Senator, we have closed the VET FEE-HELP program. In relation to any of those students, funding could only be continuing if those students have opted in as part of the grandfathering arrangements. I am unaware, and we would probably have to take on notice, whether there are students who have opted in. I am further advised that the provider is not approved under the government's new VET student loans program.

Senator CAMERON: But they operated under your watch.

Senator Birmingham: I closed down your old scheme and put in place a new scheme that they are now operating under.

Senator CAMERON: But they operated under your watch and they got \$8 million under your watch. When did the department first become aware that there was a problem with MHM—or is it Australasian? I know there is a business name. Will we call it MHM?

Senator Birmingham: I think Mr Paterson has made clear what the registered training organisation's name is. It is MHM.

Senator CAMERON: Dr Banerjee, when did you first become aware of the problem—not you personally but the department?

Dr Banerjee: I will take that on notice, Senator.

Answer

MHM Australasia Pty Ltd was approved to offer VET FEE-HELP Assistance from 25 June 2009.

The Department of Education and Training first became aware of concerns relating to MHM in January 2014.