

Senate Committee: Education and Employment

QUESTION ON NOTICE Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016

Outcome: Agency: TEQSA

Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ15-000273

Senator Carr, Kim asked on 03 June 2015, Proof Hansard page 27

TEQSA: minister writing to TEQSA about student cheating

Question

Senator KIM CARR: Is it just a mere coincidence that it was the minister who wrote you? You did not initiate actions yourself?

Prof. Saunders: I would have to take that on notice, but I think if we looked at the dates we would find that it was made available in the media. The minister wrote very quickly to us—

Senator KIM CARR: Five days.

Prof. Saunders: I think we had a conversation with the department at the same time and we initiated seeking a response from the providers, all within a very short—

Senator KIM CARR: That is why I asked you what date you discussed this with the department. There is a five-day gap between the media reports and the minister writing to you, so I presume there would have been conversations prior to that.

Prof. Saunders: As I said, I will have to go back and check.

Answer

The Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) has provided the following response.

Officers from the Department of Education and Training contacted TEQSA by email on 13 November 2014 about allegations of student cheating using online services by MyMaster published in various media articles that day. This initiated discussions between TEQSA and the department (including a telephone conversation between the TEQSA Chief Commissioner Professor Nicholas Saunders and the department's Acting Deputy Secretary Ms Jessie Borthwick) between 13 November 2014 and 16 November 2014.

On 17 November 2014, the Minister wrote to the TEQSA Chief Commissioner and the Chief Commissioner responded to the Minister on 18 November 2014 and 19 December 2014.

The Chief Commissioner wrote to all higher education providers on 24 November 2014.