

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**  
**Additional Estimates – February 2016**  
**ANSWER TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

Prime Minister and Cabinet portfolio

**Department/Agency:** Office of the Official Secretary to the Governor-General

**Program 1:** Support for the Governor-General and Official Activities

**Outcome 1:** The performance of the Governor-General's role is facilitated through the organisation and management of official duties, management and maintenance of the official household and property and administration of the Australian Honours and Awards system.

**Topic:** Australia Day Awards – Status of Knight's and Dames

**Senator:** Wong

**Question reference number:** 273

**Type of Question:** Written

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** 1 April 2016

**Number of Pages:** 2

With reference to the Prime Minister's announcement on the 2 November 2015 that "The Prime Minister announced today that Her Majesty The Queen has agreed to the Government's recommendation to remove Knights and Dames from the Order of Australia."

On what date was the Prime Minister's recommendation communicated to the Governor-General and the Palace.

Was the Governor-General consulted by the Government prior to the decision being taken.

Did the Palace consult the Governor-General following the recommendation.

On what date were the Letters Patent amended. Can a copy of the amendment be provided.

How many Knights and Dames does Australia currently have.

Under Mr Turnbull's arrangements – the third set of arrangements for the Order of Australia under this government – will future Governors-General be automatically appointed a Knight or Dame

**Answer:**

On 26 October 2015 the recommendation was received by the Office from the Prime Minister and subsequently forwarded to Buckingham Palace on the same day.

No.

No.

29 October 2015.

The amended letters patent were published (and are available) in the Commonwealth of Australia Gazette dated 22 December 2015.

Seven.

The level of Knight (AK) and Dame (AD) have been removed from the Order of Australia. In future all Governors-General will be the Principal Companion (AC) within the Order, unless they are already a Knight or Dame of the Order.