

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
BUDGET ESTIMATES 2014-15

Finance Portfolio

Department/Agency: AEC

Outcome/Program: General

Topic: Funding and Disclosure – Akira Investments

Senator: Faulkner

Question reference number: F303

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: Friday, 11 July 2014

Number of pages: 1

Question:

In relation to the \$200,000 gift from Akira Investments (Akira) noted in the Free Enterprise Foundation's 2012-2013 Disclosure Return:

- a) Is the AEC aware of a report on ABC News dated 3 June 2014 which stated -
Television pioneer Reg Grundy has confirmed he made a \$200,000 donation to the Free Enterprise Foundation Until now the source of the donation, one of the largest to be channelled to the Liberal Party through the Foundation, has remained a mystery. The ABC can also reveal that federal Liberal Party director Brian Loughnane directed the Mr Grundy and his wife Joy to make the donation to the Free Enterprise Foundation, rather than directly to the party, to maintain their privacy. The payment was made via Akira Investments Ltd, which is owned by the Grundys. In a statement, Akira director Jo Cullen-Cronshaw said: "I made enquiries of Mr Brian Loughnane and was advised by him that the best way to maintain their privacy would be to make the donation through the Free Enterprise Foundation. As they are extremely private individuals they always prefer that any donation they make, political or philanthropic, remains anonymous." ?
- b) Has the AEC received a Donor Return from Akira?
- c) Will the AEC ask Akira to lodge a donor return showing the donation to the Liberal Party consistent with s. 305B(2) of the Act? If not, why not?

Answer:

- (a) Yes.
- (b) No.
- (c) All registered political parties and associated entities are required to comply with relevant disclosure laws, and the AEC is active in ensuring that this occurs.