

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**BUDGET ESTIMATES 2017-18**

Finance Portfolio  
24-25 May 2017

**Department/Agency:** Finance

**Outcome/Program:** 2/2.1

**Topic:** Vetting or Accuracy of AusGov Boards

**Senator:** McAllister

**Question reference number:** F37

**Type of question:** Hansard Proof, 24 May 2017, F&PA Committee, Page 111

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** Friday, 7 July 2017

**Number of pages:** 2

**Question:**

**Senator McALLISTER:** On 20 March the member for Goldstein, Tim Wilson, was still listed on AusGovBoards as a member of the Human Rights Commission despite having resigned more than a year ago. Senator Wong asked the Attorney-General why that was the case. His answer, which was in Senate question on notice 417, said: 'The Department of finance maintains the ausgovboards.gov.au website. This, therefore, is a question for the Department of Finance.'

**Senator Cormann:** Yes, it was all our fault. If there was an oversight, we apologise. I am sure it will have been fixed by now.

**Senator SMITH:** Tim Wilson is hardly the shy, retiring sort. It would be very easy to find out where he went!

**Senator GALLAGHER:** But is it? We have just heard that the information comes to Finance from the portfolio agencies. Does Finance have a vetting or accuracy check on information that is on AusGovBoards. Mr Sheridan, it seems to me that the description you have outlined is one of maintaining software, not content.

**Mr Sheridan:** We maintain the platform. The information generally comes from agencies. In terms of when specific things occurred, I would need to check; I do not know particularly. In that particular instance, I do not know whether information was provided and when.

**Senator GALLAGHER:** Could you follow that up for us?

**Mr Sheridan:** Yes.

**Answer:**

The Department of Finance is responsible for the ongoing operation of the platform used to deliver the ausgovboards.gov.au web site.

The content on the ausgovboards.gov.au web site is maintained by a network of officers located across numerous Australian Government entities who are responsible for ensuring that the information for their boards is authorised, current and accurate.

System audit logs indicate the following series of events relating to Tim Wilson's board appointment entry on the ausgovboards.gov.au web site:

**25 February 2014 15:53** Tim Wilson's appointment to the board was published to the ausgovboards.gov.au public website by an officer from the Attorney General's Department. The appointment Position End Date was set as "17 February 2019".

**10 April 2017 14:04** Tim Wilson's position was unpublished from the ausgovboards.gov.au website and the Appointment End Date was changed to 19 February 2016. The system change was actioned by an officer from the Department of Finance in response to a request from an officer from the Attorney-General's Department.

The system, by design, restricts the amendment of a board Appointment End Date to system administrators at the Department of Finance. This is a design requirement to ensure the integrity of the reporting function.

**10 April 2017 14:17** An officer from the Attorney General's Department added a moderation note for Tim Wilson's appointment to indicate that "Mr Wilson resigned effective 19 February 2016".