

**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:** 3/3.1

**Topic:** Printing and Communication Expenses – James Ashby

**Senator:** Watt

**Question reference number:** F83

**Type of question:** Hansard Proof, 25 May 2017, F&PA Committee, page 87-88

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

**Number of pages:** 1

**Question:**

**Senator WATT:** The questions I had related to some media reports about taxpayer funding that had been paid to either Mr James Ashby or companies under his control—I think his personal companies—for printing and communication expenses.

...

**Senator WATT:** No, but there have been a lot over the last few weeks. What has your department done to ensure that those claims by Mr Ashby are correct and that he is not, in fact, profiteering out of this?

...

**Senator WATT:** In light of the revelations we have heard this week, those recordings, could I ask your department to review those invoices? I understand that, if it were across the board and across every single invoice, that would be a massive amount of work. But, given we have heard these recordings now, I wonder whether it would be wise to ensure that Mr Ashby's claims are true?

**Senator Ryan:** The best we can do is take your question on notice—noting that I am not sure if the department has the expertise or capacity to answer the question.

**Answer:**

The Department of Finance relies on the certification made by Senators and Members that the details in the invoice/receipt attached to a printing and communications certification are correct, that the goods/services were received, and that the payment is a claimable work expense.