

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT

Group 1

Question No. 15

Senator Carr asked the following question at the hearing on 24 February 2014:

Senator KIM CARR: Can you tell me what the hourly rate will be for the counsel assisting the royal commission?

Ms Glanville: No. I would have to take that on notice.

Senator Brandis: I am not sure that the counsel assisting is being remunerated on an hourly rate basis or a per diem basis.

Senator KIM CARR: What payments are being made to the counsel assisting?

Ms Glanville: As I said, I would have to take that on notice.

Senator KIM CARR: And what is the commissioner being paid?

Ms Glanville: I would also have to take that on notice.

Senator KIM CARR: How many staff of the Attorney-General's Department are now working on this particular commission?

Senator Brandis: No staff of the Attorney-General's Department, as I understand it, are working on the commission, but staff from the Attorney-General's Department are providing administrative support to the commission.

Senator KIM CARR: How many?

Ms Glanville: Around 11.

Senator KIM CARR: What is the total cost for the 11?

Ms Glanville: I would have to take that on notice as well.

Senator KIM CARR: Are you able to tell me whether there are any other costs associated with the royal commission that the government will have to pay?

The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:

There is a general practice across the Commonwealth of not disclosing the daily or hourly rates at which the Commonwealth has engaged individual legal counsel on the basis that these rates should be treated as commercial-in-confidence.

This practice has developed to protect the Government's financial interests and to maintain the Government's negotiating position in relation to individual contracts with legal counsel.