

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

Group: 2

Program: 1.1

Question No. AE15/078

Senator Rhiannon asked the following written question from the 24 February and 27 March 2015 hearings:

1. At an estimates hearing in December 2013, we heard that the FOI workload was increasing by 10%-15% per year.
 - a. Was there anticipation that the workload would decrease with the change in how appeals work?
 - b. Was the appeal system changed to drive down the number of appeals?

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

- (a) Yes. It is anticipated that the number of applications to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT) will be less than the number of applications for external review received by the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner. This is due to two major reasons (1) the requirement for internal review will improve the quality of decision making and provide applicants with a clearer understanding of the reasons why decisions are made (2) the application fee for external merits review is an appropriate mechanism to ensure that genuine applications are able to be pursued.
- (b) No.