

## **QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE**

**ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING : 23 February 2015**

**IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO**

**(AE15/068) - Royal Commission - Child Abuse - Programme 2.1 Refugee and Humanitarian Assistance (Administered)**

Senator Macdonald, Ian (L&CA 111) asked:

Mr Pezzullo: Chair, I might exercise the secretary's prerogative to go first. I was asked a question, particularly by Senator Carr, about our dealings with the royal commission regarding institutional responses to child abuse. I indicated that we had not been called, nor had notice been served for us to appear before that royal commission. But I said that we had been in touch with the commission and we knew that they had a watching brief or that they were observing the proceedings that had arisen pursuant to the inquiry conducted by the Human Rights Commission. I have since been advised and apprised myself of the fact that a number of documents have been prepared and sent to the royal commission. In the time available I have not established them—this is the element that remains on notice—and I would prefer to answer it formally on notice as to whether the documents were volunteered to the commission by my officers or whether they were asked in a manner short of a full notice to appear. But a number of documents have been provided and we continue to engage in ongoing cooperation with the secretariat to the royal commission. As to the status of those documents and whether they were, as it were, compelled, that is the element that I will retain on formal notice and provide a written response to the committee. But, yes, we have had dealings with the royal commission and have provided them with certain information that, subject to the privilege of that commission—I am just not quite sure what the rules are there—we will take formally on notice.

*Answer:*

The Attorney-General's Department (AGD) is responsible for coordinating the Commonwealth's representation before the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. In consultation with AGD, the Department has fully cooperated with all requests by the Royal Commission to provide information. Information has been provided both in response to requests for information and formal Notices to Produce.

The Department will continue to cooperate to the fullest extent possible with the Royal Commission.