

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

**Group 2**

**Program: 2.1**

**Question No. BE15/003**

**Senator Bilyk asked the following question at the hearing on 27 May 2015:**

Senator BILYK: I wanted to ask about a number of appointments to the governing bodies of arts and cultural institutions announced by you on Thursday, 11 December. These were the appointments to the Council of the Australian National Maritime Museum. I understand that former Liberal senator Ian Campbell and former New South Wales Liberal MP Peter Collins were appointed to those positions. Is that correct?

Senator Brandis: Yes, they were among the people appointed.

Senator BILYK: And the appointment to the council of the National Museum of Australia was the conservative opinionist Janet Albrechtsen. Is that correct?

Senator Brandis: I am not aware that there is a word 'opinionist' in the English language. But if by that you mean the opinion writer or op-ed writer, Dr Albrechtsen was certainly appointed, yes.

Senator BILYK: I think former Liberal-National MP Mr Paul Neville was appointed to the board of the National Film and Sound Archive. Is that correct?

Senator Brandis: He certainly was. Correct.

Senator BILYK: Were these positions publicly advertised?

Senator Brandis: It is not the practice to advertise public position at that level for those institutions.

Senator BILYK: So that is a no?

Senator Brandis: It is a no because that is not the practice.

Senator BILYK: I am just making sure that that is a no.

CHAIR: Is that the practice of your government or all governments?

Senator Brandis: Previous governments, as I understand it.  
[...]

Senator Brandis: I will take that on notice, if I may, but I am reasonably confident in saying that ordinarily it has not been the practice for these particular institutions you have identified for those appointments to be advertised.

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

Consistent with the long-standing practice of successive governments, positions on governing boards and councils are not publicly advertised.