

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

**Group: 2**

**Program: 1.9**

**Question No. BE15/013**

**Senator Bilk asked the following question at the hearing on 27 and 28 May 2015:**

Senator BILYK: I want to go back to some more questioning on the trade union royal commission. I understand there was an interim report. Was that to you, Senator Brandis, in October 2014?

Senator Brandis: It was to His Excellency the Governor-General.

Senator BILYK: There was a secret portion in that report, was there?

Senator Brandis: There was a confidential—

Senator BILYK: Confidential—secret—confidential. I am presuming you are telling me you cannot tell me what is in it. How many pages was that confidential report?

Senator Brandis: I do not know.

Senator BILYK: Did you see it?

Senator Brandis: Yes.

Senator BILYK: Could you take it on notice and tell me—

Senator Brandis: How many pages?

Senator BILYK: how many pages the secret report was.

Senator Brandis: Yes.

Senator BILYK: Has the secret report been shared with the Prime Minister?

Senator Brandis: I had better take that on notice. I imagine that it has come to his attention.

Senator BILYK: And, if so, if it has been read by any of the Prime Minister's staff as well.

Senator Brandis: I do not know.

Senator BILYK: Please ask the Prime Minister when you check that. It should not be that hard.

Senator Brandis: I am not quite sure what you are asking me. 'Has it been read by him?' Is that what you are asking?

Senator BILYK: I am asking (a) Has it gone to the Prime Minister?—

Senator Brandis: Yes.

Senator BILYK: and (b) Was it read by the Prime Minister? and (c) Was it read by any of the Prime Minister's staff?

Senator Brandis: I will inquire of the Prime Minister. This, of course, is a question not for me but for the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

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

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet has advised that within the Commonwealth access to the 87-page confidential volume has been limited to specific staff within the Prime Minister's office and the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet for the purpose of briefing the Prime Minister.