

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

Group: 2

Program: 1.9

Question No. BE15/014

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

Senator BILYK: I do appreciate you inquiring of the Prime Minister for me. Do you know if it has been chaired outside of government at all?

Senator Brandis: I do not. When you say 'outside of government' I am sure it has been shared with the police. I do not know if you regard the police, for the purposes of your question, as being part of government.

Senator BILYK: Not in this particular instance, I guess—the police. Is there anyone else you know it has been shared with?

Senator Brandis: There is a police apparatus, under the jurisdiction of Commander Ney, attached to the royal commission so, perhaps, Commander Ney might be able to add to my answer.

Mr Ney: Yes, Senator. I am from the Australian Federal Police and am performing the role as Commander of Investigations for the trade union royal commission. That report has been shared with me, but it has not gone back to policing agencies. It has stayed within the royal commission.

Senator BILYK: Besides you, have other members of your staff looked at it?

Mr Ney: My inspector for the New South Wales task force has seen the report.

Senator BILYK: But that is all, from your end.

Mr Ney: That is correct.

Senator BILYK: Minister, please take on notice if it has been shared with anybody else.

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 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. Other copies of the confidential report are held by the Royal Commission into Trade Union Governance and Corruption and state governments.