

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

Group: 3

Program: 1.7

Question No. BE15/017

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

Senator JACINTA COLLINS: What I am trying to identify is how common would it be for someone to write to you, Attorney, seeking advice about contacting IS.

Senator Brandis: I will take that on notice; I will find out how often correspondence of that kind has been received.

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

The Attorney-General receives a large volume of correspondence from individuals and groups, on a range of matters relating to national security, including to matters relating to organisations which may or may not be listed as terrorist organisations under the *Criminal Code Act 1995*, and the legality of taking certain action with respect to these organisations. In 2013-14 the Department processed almost 40,000 items of correspondence to portfolio ministers.

The Attorney-General has received many letters relating to the organisation known as Islamic State and other listed terrorist organisations. Due to the volume and various matters covered by this correspondence, the Attorney-General's Department is unable, without expending considerable time and resources, to advise how many of these letters may have included a request for advice about contacting this organisation.