

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
BUDGET ESTIMATES 2017

Australian Human Rights Commission

Question No. BE17-077

Senator Wong asked the following question on 25 May 2017:

Senator WONG: In your submission to the inquiry into freedom of speech in December 2016, there was a recommendation in relation to the alleviation of budget constraints. The commission sought a reversal of the cuts in MYEFO in 2014-15 and 2016-17, the restoration of the funding removed in the 2014-15 budget and the inclusion in future budget processes of equivalent funding of the eighth full-time commissioner, who has since been appointed. I wonder if you can give us a little more detail on that recommendation in the light of this budget.

Prof. Triggs: If I may, I will give you absolutely precise information on notice. But to answer your question, at the moment, we have been subject to the efficiency dividends. We lost a significant sum of money that went to the royal commission on institutional child sex abuse. We have had appointments for new commissioners made without funding for them.

The response to the honourable Senator's question is as follows:

The following are of primary concern:

- The costs associated with having an additional full time commissioner appointed to the Commission in May 2016, without the restoration of the funding cut instituted in the 2014-15 budget for the same full time commissioner.
- The impact of a redirection of \$1.7 million for 2016-17 and 2017-18.