

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

**Group: 2**

**Program: 2.1**

**Question No. SBE14/003**

**Senator Collins asked the following question at the hearing on 20 November 2014:**

Senator Brandis: To add to that: one of the problems that I think exist in this area of policy is that, as I said before, the lion's share of funding goes to the Australia Council but there are some arts institutions, arts companies or contributors to the sector that do not fall within the somewhat rigidly defined windows of the Australia Council, so they tend to fall between the cracks. Ms Basser, I see you nodding your head. It is people who fall between the cracks who are told by the Australia Council, 'We don't say you're unworthy, but we just don't have a window for someone like you to apply to us.' They sometimes—and Melba is an example of this—come to the Ministry for the Arts, and the ministry assesses the bid on a case-by-case basis guided by the policy criteria that governments from time to time set. I gave a speech just before the election in which I set out seven principles that would guide a coalition government's arts policy, and the ministry, I believe, has regard to those values in the administration and in approaching individual bids of that kind.

Senator JACINTA COLLINS: When was that speech?

Senator Brandis: I think—

CHAIR: You do not remember, Senator Collins?

Senator JACINTA COLLINS: No. I do not think I had any connection to arts portfolio responsibilities at that point.

Senator Brandis: I think it was in August 2013. I will send you a copy.

Senator JACINTA COLLINS: I am sure it is on your website; but, if I have a date—

Senator Brandis: Why don't you ask for a copy of it? I will take it on notice and send it to you; in fact, I'll even sign it for you!

Senator JACINTA COLLINS: Just the date would be good.

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

The speech was delivered on 19 August 2013.