

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

Group: 1

Program: Other Agency

Question No. SBE14/196

Senator Ludwig asked the following written question from the 20 November and 11 December 2014 hearings.

1. Is it the policy of the Government to have ministerial staff observe meetings between Commissioners and members of Parliament/Senators?
2. If so, where and when was this policy articulated?
3. Is this policy a departure from previous practice? If so, what was the previous practice?
4. On how many occasions since the change of Government has a ministerial staffer observed meetings between a Commissioner and an MP/Senator?
5. Has a ministerial staffer ever observed a meeting between a Commissioner and a Liberal or National MP or Senator?

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

1. It is for the Government to state its policy on this matter.
2. See answer 1.
3. The Commission has never been subject to such a policy direction. However, the Commission does observe a protocol of informing its portfolio minister of meetings with members of Parliament as a matter of courtesy.
4. Once. This does not include meetings with the Attorney-General.
5. Only when the coalition has been in Government.