

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

Program: 1.1

Question No. SBE15/090

Senator Collins asked the following question at the hearing on 20 October 2015:

1. When the former Labor Government announced that Australia would join the OGP, it nominated the Attorney-General's Department as the lead agency. The Abbott Government changed that to the Department of Finance by April 2014. It has now been reported that the lead agency has been changed once again to Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.
 - a. Is this true?
 - b. Why was this decision taken?
 - c. What costs have been incurred because of each of the two reallocations which have now taken place?
2. If the AGD remains the lead agency for this initiative, then:
 - a. Has the Government recommitted to advancing its application to join the OGP?
 - b. Please advise what actions the Government has taken since the election to develop an action plan.
 - c. As Australia's participation in the OGP appeared to grind to a halt under Prime Minister Abbott, was it the Abbott Government's policy to abandon the OGP project?
 - d. Will the Turnbull Government now work towards full membership of the OGP?
 - e. Please describe the commitments Australia would be required to make if we were to commit to the OGP.
 - f. Will commitment to the OGP have ramifications for the Government's plans to abolish the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner?

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

1. (a) Yes.
 - (b) The change occurred as part of machinery of government changes included in the Administrative Arrangements Order dated 21 September 2015.
 - (c) No costs have been incurred by the Attorney-General's Department.
2. Not applicable.