

**Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates October 2016

**Agriculture and Water Resources**

**Question:** 158

**Division/Agency:** Information Services Division

**Topic:** Wikipedia Edits

**Proof Hansard page:** Written

**Senator BILYK asked:**

With reference to an article entitled 'Investigation launched after public servants, staffers caught making offensive Wikipedia edits' published by James Massola of Fairfax on 26 October 2016:

- a) Were the changes made to the Barnaby Joyce Wikipedia page performed by a person in the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources or a person in the Minister's office? If a Minister's office, which Minister, and what is the position title of the person responsible for making that change?  
(“Department of Agriculture staff editing Barnaby Joyce’s page to point out the Nationals leader ‘has crossed the floor on 28 occasions during his time in Parliament”).
- b) What process did the Department follow to investigate these changes?
- c) What was the outcome of that investigation?

**Answer:**

- a) The change appears to have been made by a former Assistant Adviser to the Minister.
- b) The department reviewed publicly available editing records for the *Barnaby Joyce* Wikipedia page to verify the source recorded against the change. This confirmed that the change was submitted from a Department workstation at 07:39 (UTC) on 21 January 2016. The Department's web proxy logs were then reviewed to identify the user accessing the Wikipedia site at the date and time the change was submitted.
- c) The Secretary wrote to the Secretary of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet to confirm that the department has policies in place that detail staff responsibilities when using ICT equipment and information services and systems. Staff are made aware of these obligations each time they access the department's network through a logon banner that requires their agreement before providing network access.