

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

Sub Program 2.2.2

Question No. 102

Senator Brandis asked the following question at the hearing on 8 February 2010:

Regarding Gabe Watson:

- a. Has the Queensland Government asked the Commonwealth about the possibility of his extradition?
- b. Provide the Committee with all correspondence between the Queensland Government and the Commonwealth concerning the case. If correspondence has to be redacted, please explain this.
- c. At what date did the Queensland Government, by correspondence or orally at officials level, first raise the Gabe Watson case with the Commonwealth?

The answer to the Honourable Senator's question is as follows:

The Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department understands this question refers to the State of Alabama's proposal to prosecute Mr David Gabriel Watson in relation to the death of his wife, Ms Christina Mae Watson, after his release from custody in Queensland.

- a. The Queensland Government has not asked the Commonwealth about the possibility of Mr Watson's extradition to the United States of America.
- b. The Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department produces the attached correspondence between Ministers of the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments. On 22 January 2010 the Queensland Attorney-General, the Honourable Cameron Dick MP, wrote to the Commonwealth Government about the State of Alabama's request for evidence to support its proposed prosecution of Mr Watson (**Attachment A**). On 4 February 2010 the Commonwealth Minister for Home Affairs, the Honourable Brendon O'Connor MP, replied to the Queensland Government (**Attachment B**).

The attached correspondence has not been redacted. The Queensland Department of Justice and Attorney-General has advised that it has no objections to the letter of 22 January 2010 from the Honourable Cameron Dick MP being produced to the Committee. This letter encloses correspondence from the Attorney-General for the State of Alabama, the Honourable Troy King, dated 19 January 2010 and 9 November 2009 respectively. Alabama authorities have advised that they have no objections to this correspondence being produced to the Committee.

- c. The Queensland Police Service first raised the State of Alabama's proposal to prosecute Mr Watson after his release from custody in Queensland with officials of the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department on 22 September 2009.