

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

Priorities and Coordination Division

Question No. 171

Senator Barnett asked the following question at the hearing on 27 May 2009:

It has been proposed to legislate to allow FOI style regime for some private sector organisations:

- a) What is the Government's position on this?
- b) Has the Department been required to prepare any advice or report on the cost and impact of this proposal on business? If so, could you identify the advice and provide?

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

On 24 March 2009, the former Cabinet Secretary and Special Minister of State, Senator the Hon John Faulkner, announced that the Government would be asking the Australian Law Reform Commission (ALRC) to examine whether FOI should be extended to, or another disclosure regime provided for, the private sector. References to the ALRC are made by the Attorney-General in accordance with the *Australian Law Reform Commission Act 1996*. The Attorney-General will take into account the existing workload and other priorities of the ALRC, including when it will complete its current inquiries, in progressing this matter.

The Department has not been asked, at this stage, to prepare any advice or report on the cost and impact of this proposal on business.