

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

Corporate/cross-portfolio/general

Question No. 82

Senator Ludwig asked the following question at the hearing on 18 November 2013:

Briefings for other parties

1. Have any briefings and/or provision of information been provided to the Australian Greens? If yes, please include:
 - a) How are briefings requests commissioned?
 - b) What briefings have been undertaken? Provide details and a copy of each briefing.
 - c) Provide details of what information has been provided and a copy of the information.
 - d) Have any briefings request been unable to proceed? If yes, provide details of what the requests were and why it could not proceed.
 - e) How long is spent preparing and undertaking briefings/information requests for the Australian Greens? How many staff are involved and how many hours? Provide a breakdown for each employment classification.
2. Have any briefings and/or provision of information been provided to Independents? If yes, please include:
 - a) How are briefings requests commissioned?
 - b) What briefings have been undertaken? Provide details and a copy of each briefing.
 - c) Provide details of what information has been provided and a copy of the information.
 - d) Have any briefings request been unable to proceed? If yes, provide details of what the requests were and why it could not proceed.
 - e) How long is spent preparing and undertaking briefings/information requests for the Independents? How many staff are involved and how many hours? Provide a breakdown for each employment classification.
 - f) Which Independents have requested briefings and/or information?
3. Have any briefings and/or provision of information been provided to parties other than Labor or the Greens? If yes, please include:
 - a) How are briefings requests commissioned?
 - b) What briefings have been undertaken? Provide details and a copy of each briefing.
 - c) Provide details of what information has been provided and a copy of the information.
 - d) Have any briefings request been unable to proceed? If yes, provide details of what the requests were and why it could not proceed.
 - e) How long is spent preparing and undertaking briefings/information requests for the parties other than Labor or the Greens? How many staff are involved and how many hours? Provide a breakdown for each employment classification.

f) Which parties have requested briefings and/or information?

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

This response covers the period 1 June 2013 to 18 November 2013 and excludes information or work such as responding to Freedom of Information requests, processing ministerial correspondence, or preparing answers to questions on notice submitted by Australian Greens or Independent members of Parliament. It also excludes briefings that may have been given to Australian Greens or Independent members of Parliament in their capacity as members of a Parliamentary Committee. Additionally, the reply excludes normal legislative briefings as outlined in the 2010 parliamentary agreement between the former government and the Australian Greens and the independent former members for New England and Lyne.

1. a)-e) No briefings have been commissioned.
2. a)-f) No briefings have been commissioned.
3. a)-f) For the reporting period between 1 June 2013 – 26 June 2013, before the pre-election consultation commenced, the department was not commissioned to prepare any briefings for parties.

In accordance with convention a shadow minister may be given approval by a minister to have discussions with officials of government departments during the pre-election period. The convention takes effect from three months before the expiry of the House of Representatives or the date of announcement of a House of Representatives election, whichever comes first. In 2013 the pre-election consultation period began on 27 June 2013.

During the pre-election consultation period the department prepared one briefing package for Senator Brandis as Shadow Minister. Details are available on the department's freedom of information disclosure log.