

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2025-26

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Outcome/Program: Outcome 1: Prime Minister and Cabinet

Topic: eSafety Commissioner - consultation on safety by design

Senator: Dave Sharma

Question reference number: [PSU to insert before tabling]

Type of question: Spoken; Proof Hansard pages 27-28, 2 December 2025

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 29 January 2026

Number of pages: 1

Question:

Senator SHARMA: I return to Senator Collins's earlier questioning about that eSafety Commission report into the use of electronic devices to pursue gender based violence. I noticed in the eSafety Commissioner's communication on this that she calls upon tech companies to build safety into devices and accounts from the start. Is that government policy or a recommendation from the eSafety Commissioner?

...

Ms Leahy: Yes, the communications department is. I think there have been some small changes to membership recently; let me just check. No, the eSafety Commissioner isn't part of that IDC. The eSafety Commissioner is, however, part of another governance mechanism that Ms Raman chairs around working for women. The eSafety Commissioner attends those meetings and certainly shares information of this nature.

Senator SHARMA: Okay. Was the Office for Women consulted about this recommendation from the eSafety Commissioner? Would that normally be the case before it was made? Was it considered by the IDC process?

Ms Leahy: Not typically, no—in terms of the IDC process, not necessarily—but we will take it on notice in terms of consultation at a more individual level.

Answer:

The eSafety Commissioner is the independent online safety regulator and is empowered to encourage prevention, provide protection and drive proactive systemic change to help safeguard Australians at risk of online harms.

The Office for Women meets with the eSafety Commissioner and the staff of the Commission on a regular basis across a range of priorities. This includes engagement with the Commission on the safety by design principles and guidance they have developed for the technology industry, to learn from their experiences to inform government's broader approach to the application of safety by design to Commonwealth systems.

Building safety by design into products and services from their commencement has been discussed between the Office for Women and the Commissioner on many occasions.

Date assigned to MO [For use PSU]	Initial: [Select date from drop-down] Latest update: [Select date from drop-down]
Clearing Officer [Band 3, or agency equivalent]	Padma Raman
Group or Division / Agency	Office for Women
Contact Officer & Branch [Band 1 / Band 2, or agency equivalent]	Name: Rochelle White Branch: Gender Based Violence and Social Policy
Contact Officer details	Email: Rochelle.White@pmc.gov.au Business Hours Ph: s 22(1)(a)(ii) Mobile: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Consultation	N/A
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s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Katy Gallagher

14/1/26