



**Senator the Hon. Michael Ronaldson**

Minister for Veterans' Affairs

Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Centenary of ANZAC

Special Minister of State

Ms Rosemary Laing  
Clerk of the Senate  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

1.0 JUL 2014

Dear Ms Laing,

Thank you for your letter to the Leader of the Government in the Senate, Senator the Hon Eric Abetz dated 10 July 2014 regarding Order 330 agreed to by the Senate.

The Australian Electoral Commission, an independent statutory authority, has advised that the matters referred to in the motion, submitted by Senator Rhiannon, relate to decisions taken by the AEC under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

I am further advised that the FOI applicant has lodged an application for review of the AEC's decision by the Administrative Appeals Tribunal. As the matter is before the Tribunal, it would not be appropriate for the Government to comment further.

In relation to the source code for the Senate counting system, I am advised that publication of the software could leave the voting system open to hacking or manipulation. In addition, I am advised that the AEC classifies the relevant software as commercial-in-confidence as it also underpins the industrial and fee-for-service election counting systems.

For these reasons, the Government will not table any documents or correspondence relating to Mr Cordover's FOI request or the source code for the Senate counting system.

Yours sincerely,

**SENATOR THE HON. MICHAEL RONALDSON**