

Select Committee on Administration of Sports Grants

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Topic: Role of Senator McKenzie's Adviser

Senator: Rice

Question reference number: 004

Type of question: Hansard, page 7, 22 July 2020

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 7 August 2020

Number of pages: 1

Question:

Ms Foster: My memory is that the adviser was preparing a version of the spreadsheet to assist her to develop an argument for additional funding for the program. So this was a piece of research work she was doing, as an adviser.

Senator RICE: Can you tell me the role of that adviser we're talking about?

Mr Gaetjens: I can't.

Ms Foster: My understanding is that she was the sports adviser, but we will have to check that to make sure that that is accurate—if we indeed have that information. I'm not sure that we had the adviser's name.

Senator RICE: Can you take that on notice and check that.

Answer:

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet is not aware of the specific role of the person, who was an Adviser to Senator the Hon Bridget McKenzie when she was the Minister for Sport.

Select Committee on Administration of Sports Grants

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Topic: Detail of email from Senator McKenzie's Adviser

Senator: Rice

Question reference number: 005

Type of question: Hansard, page 7, 22 July 2020

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 7 August 2020

Number of pages: 1

Question:

Senator RICE: Was there any text in the email?

Mr Gaetjens: I think it's best for us to take this on notice. I don't want to mislead the Senate, and you're asking questions of specific detail. I think I'll take them on notice.

Answer:

There was no text in the email.

Select Committee on Administration of Sports Grants

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Topic: Prime Minister's role in the process

Senator: Gallagher

Question reference number: 007

Type of question: Hansard, page 12, 22 July 2020

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 7 August 2020

Number of pages: 2

Question:

Senator GALLAGHER: Mr Gaetjens, I note a couple of times now you've said that the Audit Office report didn't identify the Prime Minister as being part of the process and that perhaps contributed to why you didn't look closely at his office's role during your report. But I do note that there is a footnote in the report by the Audit Office, footnote 46, which has become quite famous, which says:

'The evidence available to the ANAO is that representations were received across the three rounds both directly and indirectly, including through the Prime Minister's Office.'

That was in the audit report. Did that reference elicit any inquiries as part of your inquiry?

Mr Gaetjens: No. That's a very standard process that applies. I will check this on notice, but my memory of Auditor-General evidence provided to this committee—and, again, I will stand corrected for the actual words used—is that there was no indication of whether representations from the Prime Minister's office were more or less successful than others. I will just double-check that, but I think that's similar wording to what was used in previous evidence to this committee.

Answer:

The following is extracted from the evidence provided by Mr Boyd of the Australian National Audit Office at the hearing of the Select Committee on Administration of Sports Grants Inquiry on 13 February 2020.

Senator RICE: Did you have evidence of emails which went beyond that representation of just suggesting that a project be considered favourably to any directions from the Prime Minister's office?

Mr Boyd: In terms of directions, as we say it was a matter of representing various sources, be it another member of parliament saying, 'In my electorate I'd like to see these funded,' or: 'Here's a list of projects which the government broadly is looking to support with funding. How many of those can be accommodated from within this program? Can they be included in the approved list?' We say some would be included, some would not, some would be

included for a period of time but then be excluded later and some would work the other way. Clearly there was an iterative process there. It was the minister's office and the minister who were in charge of that process receiving input from various sources, including the Prime Minister's office.

Senator RICE: You say that you actually didn't do a thorough analysis of those representations?

Mr Boyd: No, what we said is that we didn't do an audit of representations. For example, there could have been other representations which didn't come into the minister's office through this means, or came into the Prime Minister's office that never came onto the minister's office that we wouldn't be aware of. What we can say is, from the representations we could see, there isn't a clear and direct relationship that says that, if a local member of parliament said that this is the project or these are the projects in my electorate which should be funded, each and every one of them was then funded.

Senator RICE: Did you consider the difference between making representations from the Prime Minister's office versus a backbencher and whether there was more influence from the representation from the Prime Minister's office than other representations?

Mr Boyd: Yes, we did. It wasn't the case that we could see that those which came, if I could say, directly from the Prime Minister's office were necessarily any more successful than those which came from a local member direct to the minister's office rather than through the Prime Minister's office.

Select Committee on Administration of Sports Grants

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Topic: Meeting with Senator McKenzie

Senator: Gallagher

Question reference number: 008

Type of question: Hansard, page 13, 22 July 2020

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 7 August 2020

Number of pages: 1

Question:

Senator GALLAGHER: So there was that one meeting, then you said there was a session after the Governance Committee. What does that mean?

Mr Gaetjens: It means I had a session with Senator McKenzie after the decision of the Governance Committee.

Senator GALLAGHER: So you met with her again?

Mr Gaetjens: Yes, and basically took her through my report.

Senator GALLAGHER: Right. And was she still a minister at that time?

Mr Gaetjens: Can I take that on notice?

Answer:

Senator McKenzie was a Minister at the time the Secretary of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Mr Phil Gaetjens, took her through his report.

Select Committee on Administration of Sports Grants

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Topic: Type of email address used by Senator McKenzie's Adviser and any documents or evidence received from the Prime Minister's Office

Senator: Rice

Question reference number: 010

Type of question: Hansard, page 17, 22 July 2020

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 7 August 2020

Number of pages: 1

Question:

Senator RICE: I just want to go back, for clarification first of all, to the adviser's spreadsheet. You said that she had sent it to another of her email addresses. Can you clarify for me what type of other email address she sent it to? Was it another government address or a private address or a political party address?

Mr Gaetjens: I'll take that on notice. I don't know. I don't have that knowledge at the moment.

Answer:

The email was sent from an aph.gov.au email address to a health.gov.au email address.

Select Committee on Administration of Sports Grants

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Topic: Additional information provided by the Prime Minister's Office

Senator: Rice

Question reference number: 015

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 17 August 2020

Number of pages: 1

Question:

What additional information or documents did the Prime Minister's Office provide in relation to the investigation of breaches of the Statement of Ministerial Standards?

- What date was it provided on?

Answer:

Refer to answer for Question on Notice 011.

Select Committee on Administration of Sports Grants

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Topic: Information sessions on the caretaker conventions – public servants

Senator: Gallagher

Question reference number: 018

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 17 August 2020

Number of pages: 2

Question:

On what date/s did the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet provide information sessions on the caretaker conventions for public servants ahead of the 2019 federal election?

- Which agencies were present at each information session?
- Which agencies did not attend any information session?

Answer:

External information sessions on the *Guidance on Caretaker Conventions* were held on:

6 February 2019 – Secretaries Board Meeting.

7 February 2019 – National Disability Insurance Agency.

25 February 2019 – Portfolio Departments Chief Finance Officers Forum.

25 February 2019 – Treasury Portfolio Agency Heads.

6 March 2019 (by phone conference) for senior staff at the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority.

26 March 2019 – Department of Health SES Forum.

26 March 2019 - SES Officers at the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development.

15 April 2019 with an open invitation for any agencies to attend. The following agencies were represented at the session:

Department of Agriculture & Water Resources

Attorney-General's Department

Department of Communications & the Arts
Department of Defence
Department of Education & Training
Department of the Environment & Energy
Department of Finance
Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade
Department of Health
Department of Home Affairs
Department of Human Services
Department of Industry, Innovation & Science
Department of Jobs & Small Business
Department of Social Services
Department of the Treasury
Department of Veteran's Affairs
Australian Public Service Commission
Office of National Intelligence
Office of Parliamentary Counsel

Select Committee on Administration of Sports Grants

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Topic: Information sessions on the caretaker conventions – Chiefs of Staff

Senator: Gallagher

Question reference number: 019

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 17 August 2020

Number of pages: 1

Question:

On what date/s did the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet provide briefings on the caretaker conventions to chiefs of staff to ministers ahead of the 2019 federal election?

- Which ministerial offices were present at each briefing?
- Which ministerial offices did not attend any briefing?

Answer:

An oral briefing was provided to ministers' Chiefs of Staff by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) on 12 February 2019. PM&C does not have an attendance list.