

Senate Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Budget Estimates

2016 - 2017

Department/Agency: Treasury

Question: BET318

Topic: Leaked document

Reference: Hansard Page No. 69 - 6 May 2016

Senator: Penny Wong

Question:

Senator WONG: Sorry, I will withdraw that question. Can you tell me why you have not initiated any investigation about nor referred to the AFP the leaking of a document which is headed 'PROTECTED Sensitive: Cabinet'?

Mr Brake: I think that would normally be a matter for the secretary to make a decision about.

Senator WONG: It is a good way to—

Senator Cormann: I think it is fair. Under the standing orders, any officer appearing in estimates is always entitled to refer a matter to a senior officer or to the minister.

Senator WONG: He is. That is fine.

Senator Cormann: We are taking that on notice. I will ask whether the secretary to the Treasury has anything to add to the evidence by Mr Brake.

Answer:

The Treasury places the utmost importance on the security of confidential information, especially Budget material. During the lead up to the Budget, Treasury put in place significant additional arrangements to safeguard confidential information such as restricting access to documents on a strict need-to-know basis and further limitations on the attendance of personnel at critical meetings. On being made aware that Mr Oakes was in possession of a document purported to contain confidential information, appropriate enquiries within the Treasury were made and it was judged that those safeguards continued to be appropriate.