

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES 2014-15

Finance Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of Finance
Outcome/Program: 3/3.1
Topic: M&PS' involvement with a job advertisement

Senator: Smith

Question reference number: F31

Type of question: Hansard, F&PA Committee, Page 109, 24 February 2015

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: Friday, 10 April 2015

Number of pages: 1

Question:

Senator SMITH: My attention was drawn to one particular ad. It was for the Leader of the Greens in the Senate, Senator Milne. It said 'Climate change campaigner—office of Greens Leader, Senator Christine Milne'. I think that if I advertised for a Liberal Party campaigner there would be a lot of questions from Senate colleagues about that. Are you familiar with the ad I am talking about? Applications closed at 5 pm on Friday, 13 February.

Ms Moy: No.

Senator SMITH: Does it sound normal for someone to advertise for a campaigner of any sort?

Ms Moy: I cannot comment. I have not seen the advertisement, so it is very difficult for me to comment and make an assessment.

...

Senator SMITH: Perhaps we could inquire whether it was taxpayer funded. If so, is this encouraged? Thinking about that, if Senator Smith were to say, 'Liberal Party campaigner', would that pass the necessary scrutiny?

Ms Halton: Senator, let us have a look at it. As a general rule—and I see a number of these kinds of inquiries from people—we do not comment on how individuals use the allowances. But let us take the issue and see what we can tell you.

Answer:

The cost of the advertisement was met by the Department of Finance under the recruitment for vacant ongoing positions entitlement. In relation to the wording used in a draft advertisement, the Senator or Member must be satisfied that the duties to be undertaken by the employee complied with Determination 2014/2 under the *Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984* which provides:

Electorate Officers work under the sole direction of the employing Senator or Member and are employed to assist the Senator or Member to carry out duties as a Member of Parliament, and not for party political purposes.