

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Additional Estimates 2016 - 2017

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
Outcome/Program: Outcome 1: Prime Minister and Cabinet
Topic: Former Minister Briggs – meetings

Senator: Kitching, Kimberley

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Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 13 April 2017

Number of pages: 2

Question:

Senator KITCHING: Has the former Minister for Cities and the Built Environment, Mr Briggs, had any meetings with members of the government? I will limit it to the government because I cannot ask you to comment on the Public Service, but perhaps Ms Kelly will be able to. Has he had any meetings with members of the government or the Public Service relating to infrastructure matters since December 2015?

Senator Brandis: I do not know.

Senator KITCHING: Will you take it on notice?

Senator Brandis: Yes, I will. May I make the point, Senator, that Mr Briggs's ministerial responsibilities did include cities and infrastructure. They did not include the defence industry or industry more generally in South Australia. So to the extent to which you have included both topics in your question, only the first of the two topics is relevant to the statement of ministerial standards.

Senator KITCHING: I understand the delineation you are making—

Senator Brandis: Secondly—

Senator KITCHING: That was merely quoting from the article.

Senator Brandis: Sure; I get that. Secondly, of course, one cannot say whether there was an obligation under this standard attracted in a particular case without knowing the particular subject matter of Mr Briggs's engagement.

Senator KITCHING: The 'note to partners'—

Senator Brandis: That is expressed in very general terms.

Senator KITCHING: 'will lead an advisory push into infrastructure and cities'. I am not asking you really about that; I am asking about whether you are aware whether Mr Briggs has had—

Senator Brandis: I have answered your question. The answer is no, but I have taken it on notice.

Senator KITCHING: You will take it on notice. Ms Kelly?

Ms Kelly: Not that I am aware of, Senator Kitching.

Senator KITCHING: Will you take it on notice as well?

Ms Kelly: I can.

Senator KITCHING: Thank you.

Ms Kelly: That is just in relation to PM&C?

Senator KITCHING: I am asking whether he has taken any meetings or has suggested he have any meetings because, in fact, the ministerial standard to which he was given notice of and presumably complied with, and is still complying with, says 'will not lobby, advocate or have business meetings with members of the government, parliament, public service or defence force'.

Senator Brandis: I understand.

Senator KITCHING: So I am asking you to take that on notice.

Senator Brandis: I understand and I have done so.

Answer:

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet has no record of business meetings involving the Hon Jamie Briggs MP and departmental officials at or above the level of Deputy Secretary or equivalent, between when Mr Briggs ceased to be a Minister on 29 December 2015 and 27 February 2017.