

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: Prime Minister's calls to Heads of States/ Heads of Government

Senator: Wong, Penny

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Question:

Senator WONG: I would like to go back to one more international call and then put something on notice. Prime Minister Turnbull and Prime Minister May spoke by telephone—I think it was on 23 February. Was PM&C involved in setting that call up? I should start by asking on which day the call actually took place—I am going off the public reports.

Mr McKinnon: I do not have the answer to that on hand. I will take it on notice. Ms Yu is still here. She may come in in a moment and have the exact detail there.

...

Ms Yu: Unfortunately, I will have to take that on notice. I do not have the answer.

Senator WONG: That is fine. Do you know what day the call was on?

Ms Yu: Could I take that on notice, or find out by a phone call again?

Senator WONG: Sure. I want to ask about some details of that call which are, essentially, along the same line as the call to the President—who was in the room, what records were taken et cetera. Are you able to see if you can obtain those, and I will see if I can come back to you. Is that all right?

Ms Yu: I will try to get that for you.

Senator WONG: And can I put on notice, please, for all telephone calls between Mr Turnbull and foreign heads of state or heads of government since the last election.

Ms Yu: Yes.

Answer:

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) liaised with the Australian High Commission in London, the Office of the Prime Minister (PMO), and the Duty Officer at 10 Downing Street to set up the call.

The phone call was on Thursday, 23 February.

PM&C received a high-level verbal read-out of the call from the Prime Minister's Office.

We will not be providing the details of all telephone calls between the Prime Minister, the Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP, and foreign heads of state or heads of government due to international relations sensitivities.