

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates 18-22 November 2013

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Outcome/Program: 1.1 Prime Minister and Cabinet

Topic: FOI request – incoming government brief

Senator: Senator the Hon Penny Wong

Question reference number: 49

Type of Question: Hansard

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 17 January 2014

Number of pages: 2

Question:

Senator WONG: Did either of you have a conversation with Dr Watt what about this matter?

Ms Croke: I prepared a brief for Dr Watt. Again, that is a standard requirement within the department for any FOI matters where a decision maker is taking a decision that is other than utterly routine—for example, if it was about somebody's personal letter to the Prime Minister that I was going to release. I would not brief the secretary for matters that are something—

Senator WONG: When did you prepare that brief to the secretary?

Ms Croke: I would have to check the exact date of that?

Senator WONG: Please do. Thank you—you can take that on notice; that is fine. Ms Kelly, did you have a conversation with Dr Watt about this matter?

Ms Kelly: I believe I did only to inform him of the contents of my conversation with Ms Croke.

Senator WONG: Could you provide me with the dates of those conversations? You keep a diary, I assume.

Ms Kelly: I will endeavour to but I do not know whether I would have that information.

Senator WONG: Do you have notes of that meeting?

Ms Kelly: I cannot answer that, Senator, but I can certainly take it on notice and make that inquiry.

Senator WONG: If you do, can you take on notice also whether you are able to provide them.

Ms Kelly: Yes.

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Answer:

Ms Croke sent a written brief to the Secretary on 15 October 2013.

Ms Kelly had a discussion with the Secretary to inform him of the contents of her conversation with Ms Croke but does not have a written record of that conversation.