

Senate Standing Committee on Economics
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Innovation, Industry, Science and Research Portfolio
Supplementary Budget Estimates 2011-2012
19 October 2011

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: DEPARTMENT OF INNOVATION, INDUSTRY, SCIENCE AND RESEARCH

TOPIC: SCIENCE DIVISION ADVICE TO PRIME MINISTER

REFERENCE: Written Question - Senator Colbeck

QUESTION No.: SI-105

Is it common for Science Division to be asked to provide advice to the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, or to the Prime Minister's office? How many times has Science Division provided a written brief to PMC and/or the Prime Minister's office during 2010-11 and 2011-12 respectively?

ANSWER

During 2010-11 and 2011-12 Science Division provided written advice on matters relating to international science and research issues requested by PM&C. They included the provision of country or regional specific science and research intelligence for briefing for the Prime Minister and Ministers, for their official overseas visits, background briefings for guest of government and dignitaries visits to Australia.

Background briefing was also provided on science and research matters for the Prime Minister's involvement in key multilateral and bilateral meetings such as the G20 meeting, Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), the visit of President Obama, the East Asia Summit (EAS), Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meeting, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and background briefing on science and technology matters for the Prime Minister's engagement in community cabinet meetings and regional visits. Background briefing was also provided to PM&C in 2011-12 for all these meetings on SKA developments.

There have also been requests, through the Minister's office, in relation to the Prime Minister's Science Engineering and Innovation Council's (PMSEIC) work. The Chief Scientist is available to provide direct briefings as required and he routinely provides advice to Government through participation in advisory committees including PMSEIC.