

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Finance and Administration Portfolio

Department of Finance and Administration

Additional Budget Estimates Hearings – 14 February 2006

Question: F9

Outcome 1, Output 1

Topic: Charter of Budget Honesty Act 1998

Hansard Page: F&PA 31

Senator Sherry asked:

Do you have an approximate figure for the resources devoted during that caretaker period to the costings of government policy announcements and opposition policy announcements?

Answer:

During the 2004 Caretaker period (31 August 2004 to 9 October 2004), the Department of Finance and Administration (Finance) undertook a number of major election related activities, including:

- Producing (with the Department of the Treasury) a Pre-election Economic and Fiscal Outlook (PEFO) report within ten days of the issue of writs;
- Costing publicly announced election commitments, as requested by the Prime Minister or the Leader of the Opposition (through the Prime Minister); and
- Preparing briefing for the incoming Government.

As these activities were largely concurrent, it is not possible to estimate the resources Finance used specifically to cost Government and Opposition election commitments other than to note that Finance approached all Government and Opposition election costings in a manner consistent with normal budget costings and in accordance with the Secretaries' Costing Election Commitments guidelines, which were publicly released on 30 July 2004.