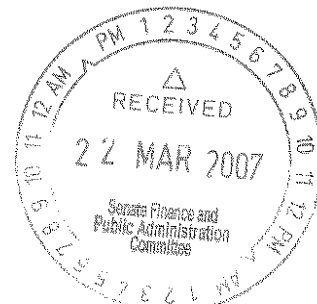




**Australian Government**

**Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet**



ONE NATIONAL CIRCUIT  
BARTON

Mr Alistair Sands  
Secretary  
Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr Sands

**RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE  
2006-07 BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARINGS – 12 FEBRUARY 2007**

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet appeared at Additional Budget Estimates on 12 February 2007. The department took 57 questions on notice.

Attached is the response to PM12. The department will provide the remaining 38 responses as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

Anne Hazell  
First Assistant Secretary  
People, Resources & Communications

20 March 2007

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio**

**Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet**

**Supplementary Additional Estimates Hearings 2007, 12 February 2007**

**Question: PM12**

**Outcome 1**

**Topic: Staffing – salaries outside the band**

**Hansard Page: F&PA 94:**

**Senator Ray asked:**

**Senator ROBERT RAY – I know it is hard, but can you give an explanation at all, Minister, as to why three people are being paid outside a salary band approved and set by the Prime Minister?**

**Senator Minchin – You are asking me why?**

**Senator ROBERT RAY – Yes, I am wondering why. We have salary bands. The Prime Minister sets them, yet he then pays three of his own staff outside of those bands. I am just wondering why?**

**Senator Minchin – I had better get you an answer on that. I am not going to ad lib an answer.**

**Senator ROBERT RAY – No, I said if you knew, tell us. If you do not know –**

**Senator Minchin – I will have to get you answer to that.**

**Answer:** The ability to authorise payments outside the salary bands creates flexibility to deal with a few exceptional cases. Such payments may be approved for a number of reasons, including the skills and experience of the member of staff and the need to attract and retain staff.