

**Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio**

**Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet**

**Additional Budget Estimates Hearings 2006-2007, 12-13 February 2007**

**Question: PM 83**

**Outcome 1, Output 1.1 (Economic and industry policy)**

**Topic: Uranium Mining, Processing and Nuclear Energy Review Taskforce**

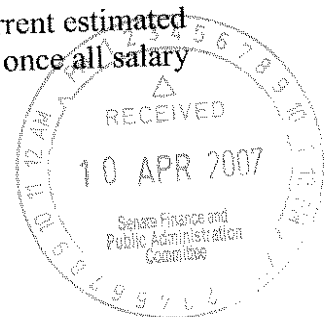
**Direct on Notice**

**Senator Evans asked:**

1. Can the Department confirm that the total cost of this Review was \$3.9 million? If not, what is the estimated total cost of the Review?
2. Can the Department provide a detailed final breakdown of the \$3.9 million in terms of fees to panel members, domestic travel costs, international travel costs, staff costs, consultancies and other costs incurred by the taskforce?
3. Can the Department confirm how many days each of the Taskforce members were employed and paid for?
4. Has the Department briefed the Prime Minister on options for the establishment of a nuclear energy sector in Australia? If so, when?
5. Has the Prime Minister been briefed on the issues that would need to be considered in determining where to site nuclear reactors in Australia?
6. Has the Prime Minister been briefed on likely sites for nuclear reactors in Australia?
7. Is the Department aware of any work by other agencies to determine suitable sites for nuclear reactors in Australia?
8. Has the Prime Minister been briefed on the likely timetable for establishing a nuclear industry in Australia?
9. Can the Department confirm whether the Prime Minister has ever visited a nuclear reactor overseas? If so, when and what reactor was visited?
10. Has the Prime Minister met with any organisations involved in the development or construction of nuclear reactors in the last two years? If so, list the organisations and the date and location of the meetings?

**Answer:**

1. The total amount budgeted for the UMPNER is **\$3,908,917**. The current estimated total cost is **\$2,343,401** as at 8 March 2007. The costs will be finalised once all salary and reimbursement claims have been received and reconciled.



**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**

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Additional Estimates Hearings 2004-2005, 14 February 2005

2. The estimated total cost **\$2,343,401** comprises:

<b>Fees paid to the six Panel members</b>	<b>\$350,000</b>
<b>Consultancies</b>	<b>\$236,445</b>
<b>Travel</b>	<b>\$224,350</b> for domestic travel <b>\$285,825</b> for international travel
<b>Salaries</b>	<b>\$886,395</b> for salaries and related expenses of Secretariat staff
<b>Administrative expenses</b>	<b>\$360,386</b> for <b>other</b> (remaining administrative expenses), including printing, legal services, hospitality, office supplies, IT services, postage conferences, freight and publications.

3. The Chairman, Dr Switkowski was employed for 69 days and was paid \$100,000 (69 working days @ \$1,450 per diem, less \$50). The other panel members were employed for 50 days and were paid \$50,000 each (50 working days @ \$1,000 per diem).

4. No.

5 and 6. Not by the Department.

7. No

8. Not by the Department. The Chief Scientist of Australia, Dr Jim Peacock AC, wrote to the Prime Minister on 21 December 2006 and advised "With the nuclear power alternative, even if we took an immediate decision to move towards this possibility, it would be at least 15 years before the first power plants could come on line." The UMPNER report (p.11) stated that "...the period for planning, building and commissioning the first nuclear power plant, including establishing the associated regulatory process, is somewhere between 10 and 20 years." Both of these documents have been provided to the Prime Minister.

9. The department's records indicate that the Prime Minister has not undertaken an official visit to a nuclear reactor as part of an official overseas visit programme.

10. The Prime Minister meets many organisations and individuals to discuss issues. Such discussions are conducted in a proper manner. Government decisions are also made in a proper manner on the merits of the case concerned.

