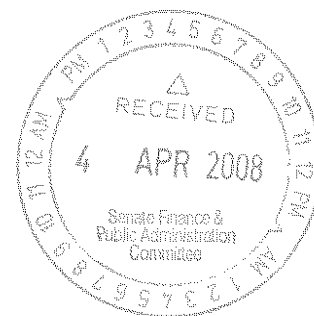


Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
Additional Estimates Hearings 18 February 2008



Question: PM20

Outcome 1, Output 4

Topic: Code of Conduct

Hansard Page: F&PA 73

Senator Coonan asked: Senator COONAN-What are you suggesting when you put weight on the fact that there may be some agreement from Dr Nelson that it was not an issue? What is the relevance of that?

Senator Chris Evans - Opposition senators have today pointed to what they say is a potential conflict of interest or an appearance of a conflict of interest and, in raising that concern, that there is an appearance of a conflict of interest. You asked for a response. What I have told you is the process by which Senator Faulkner sought to deal with those issues before he made a decision as to whether it would be appropriate for him to hold both positions.

Senator COONAN - It was Senator Faulkner's decision, was it?

Senator Chris Evans - I am sure it was in consultation. As I said, he took formal advice from PM&C and then sought the views of the opposition, which he got.

Senator COONAN - So it was not a decision of the Prime Minister on that process?

Senator Chris Evans - I can take that on notice for you.

Answer: Senator Faulkner discussed the matter with the Prime Minister who agreed with his course of action.