

Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration

ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Additional Budget Estimates Hearing – February 2009

Department of Finance and Deregulation

Finance and Deregulation Portfolio

Outcome 2, Output 2.3

Topic: Minister's Office involvement in short-listing and selection of Agencies

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Senator Ronaldson asked:

In relation to my question about which agencies were short-listed and which were finally selected for, one, advertising-creative, two, public relations and, three, market research, is that an agency responsibility?

Mr Lewis—Yes.

Senator RONALDSON—Are you able to indicate the relevant ministers or ministers' personal staff taking part in the decisions to select the successful agency or agencies?

....

Senator Sherry—It is a direct question for a minister, because the personal staff are responsible to the minister. I am happy to take it on notice.

Answer:

Under the new Guidelines on Campaign Advertising, Chief Executives of departments and agencies are responsible for certifying that any campaigns developed within their agency are compliant with the Guidelines and related Government policies, including financial management and procurement policies. Therefore, the tendering and commissioning of services is undertaken by departments in line with their Chief Executive Instructions.

Ministers are responsible for authorising campaign development in their portfolios, consistent with normal financial management processes, and for authorising the launch of a campaign. While Ministers do not have responsibility for campaign development, they have a legitimate interest in the development of campaigns in their portfolios. It is reasonable that Ministers be briefed at strategic stages of campaign development. The Finance publication *Business Planning Processes for Campaign Information and Communication Activities* provides this advice.