

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates 13-16 Feb 2012

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Outcome/Program: 1.1.1 Domestic Policy

Topic: CRC Website - Report publishing

Senator: Senator Ludlam

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Question:

Senator LUDLAM: ... I am just interested in an update on the capital city strategic planning process that the COAG Reform Council has in the late stages. On the website it says you will be publishing the report in February. Did that happen and I missed it or are we still expecting the publication soon? It does not say early February, it says February.

Mr Elton: I think that our website currently indicates that that report will be released in March rather than February. I think that may have been the advice on our website previously.

Senator LUDLAM: This was only printed out a couple of days ago but, all right, maybe there has been a late change. What is the reason for the delay?

Mr Elton: I might need to take the question on notice because I am not sure of the precise reasons. Our normal policy is to release our reports approximately one to two months after they have been submitted to COAG and the logic of that is to give COAG and governments sufficient time to prepare a response. The other factor, of course, is the Queensland election. We have a general policy that we do not release reports during caretaker periods, so that may be affecting the decision. I would like to take that question on notice to give you a precise answer.

Answer:

The COAG Reform Council has a policy of avoiding caretaker periods when releasing reports. The council had originally planned a date to release the report but that scheduled date ended up falling within the caretaker period for the Queensland Government pending the general election there on 24 March 2012. The release of the report was therefore rescheduled to 2 April 2012.