

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: 1.1.4 Support Services for Government Operations

Topic: PM spouse travel

Senator: Senator Ryan

Question reference number: 59

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Question:

Senator RYAN: Ms Leon, the department pays the costs for the Prime Minister and the Prime Minister's spouse. Has the department incurred any rental car or hire car costs—and by hire car I mean self-drive rental cars—for the Prime Minister or her spouse? If it has not incurred the costs, has it incurred the costs and then been reimbursed by the Prime Minister or her spouse?

Ms Leon: I am not aware of us having incurred any hire car costs. As you would be aware, the Prime Minister is transported by official cars wherever she travels on official business.

Senator RYAN: I appreciate that. That is why—

Ms Leon: If her partner is with her, he would travel in the same car.

Senator RYAN: Sure, but occasionally they travel separately.

Ms Leon: If they travel separately, then her partner's costs would be a matter for him, unless he is travelling on some official business.

Senator RYAN: Or, presumably, to meet the Prime Minister at a particular event.

Senator Chris Evans: I think the answer was that the office is not aware of any, but what we will do is say we will take on notice just to be doubly sure.

Senator RYAN: If there have been any car transport, rental car, hire car costs, I would appreciate the details, including if they were incurred by the department and then reimbursed by the Prime Minister or her spouse.

Ms Leon: I am not aware of any, but I will check whether any hire car costs have been incurred.

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Answer: During the period 1 July 2011 to 31 January 2012, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet was reimbursed \$961.14 for private car hire costs.