

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Portfolio: Prime Minister and Cabinet
Agency: Australian National Audit Office

Consideration of Budget Estimates: Thursday, 29 May 2003

Senator:

Senator Brandis

Hansard Page:

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Question *PM68*

Senator Brandis asked whether the ANAO had in its possession a copy or an extract of the registered mortgage. Senator Brandis also asked that the details included in the mortgage documents be reviewed in the context of statements made by John Curtin House Pty Limited concerning financing arrangements.

Answer:

A search of the ANAO's records did not identify that the ANAO had previously obtained a copy of the mortgage documents. The ANAO requested the assistance of its legal advisers to access the mortgage and to provide advice as to:

- (i) whether a link is apparent between the mortgage and the lease arrangements for Centenary House; and
- (ii) whether the ANAO can derive from the copy or extract of the registered mortgage what was the principal sum of the loan from Macquarie Bank to John Curtin House Pty Limited.

In summary, the position is as follows:

- (a) the ANAO can confirm that the date of the mortgage predates the lease by approximately 18 months;
- (b) the only document available to the public relating to the mortgage is a standard document that does not disclose any of the commercial terms of the transactions secured by the mortgage; and
- (c) on this basis the ANAO is unable to establish a link between the moneys secured by the mortgage and the terms of the lease.

A copy of the legal advice is attached for the information of the Committee.



OLIVER WINDER
Deputy Auditor-General