

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Budget Estimates Hearings 2005-2006, 23 and 24 May 2005

Question: PM 10

Outcome 1, Output 4.1

Topic: Investigations of unauthorised disclosure of information

Hansard Page: F&PA 102:

Senator Faulkner asked: What has happened about that leak? A cabinet-in-confidence letter from Senator Coonan to Mr Howard appeared on the front page of the Sydney Morning Herald. Surely that is a very serious issue, isn't it? You do not know if any action has been taken?

Answer: Some answers were provided in further discussion recorded at page F&PA 104 to F&PA 107. The document described by Senator Faulkner is not a cabinet document and the Cabinet Secretariat has no knowledge of its existence, its release, or of any investigation if the release was unauthorised. Documents may be classified as Cabinet-in-Confidence without being cabinet documents; for example, this classification would be appropriate for a document that included material that set out a decision of Cabinet.