

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 2006-2007, 22-23 May 2006

Question: PM 29

Outcome 1, Output 2.1

Topic: Health Task Force (the Podger Review)

Direct on Notice:

Senator Evans asked: (question is bolded)

- 1. Has the Health Task Force's report or précis of the task force's report been distributed to anyone else apart from those named in Questions PM 67? If so, to whom and when was it distributed?**
- 2. How many pages is the report?**
- 3. How many recommendations are included in the report?**
- 4. Does one of the recommendations of the report include a change to the division for responsibility for the health system from State to Federal Governments?**
- 5. Can a copy of the recommendations be provided?**
- 6. What proposals has the Prime Minister looked at in regard to the Commonwealth- state interface in regard to Health and Hospital administration and service delivery?**
- 7. Were any aspects of the Podger Review discussed at COAG? If yes, at what meetings (dates) did these discussions take place?**
- 8. Were all COAG members provided with a full copy of the Report? If not, what were they provided with?**
- 9. Can PM&C confirm that a leaked copy of the Podger Review was obtained by the Age Newspaper and reported in the Age Newspaper on 11 March 2005?**
- 10. Can PM&C confirm that as reported in the Age Newspaper on 12 March 2005 the Task Force's report states:**
While a Commonwealth takeover would involve complex, costly and expensive transition, the taskforce has been able to demonstrate that it is feasible and considers it would ultimately facilitate delivering on and protecting key national priorities.?
- 11. Is PM&C aware of who leaked the report to the Age Newspaper?**
- 12. Did PM&C or any other Government Agency or Department investigate the leaking of the Report?**
- 13. If not, why not?**
- 14. If yes, what were the results of the investigation?**
- 15. Who else had copies of the Podger Review prior to 11 March 2005? When did they receive the Podger Review and who provided it to them?**

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Answer: (answer is normal font)

1) The complete list of recipients is:

The Prime Minister and his Office	17 March 2005
The Treasurer	17 March 2005
The Minister for Health and Ageing	17 March 2005
The Minister for Family and Community Services	17 March 2005
The Minister for Finance and Administration	12 August 2005
The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet	17 March 2005
The Department of the Treasury	17 March 2005
The Department of Health and Ageing	17 March 2005

2) The report was 38 pages, including the cover page.

3) The report did not make any recommendations.

4) N/A

5) N/A

6) The Prime Minister was provided with advice on the interface between Commonwealth and state responsibilities. The advice was provided to assist with government decision making, and has not been publicly released

7) The proposals that the government took to COAG on 3 June 2005 and 10 February 2006 were informed by the work of the Health Task Force.

8) a) No. b) States were not provided with any material related to the report.

9) No.

10) No. The Podger Report has not been made public.

11) PM&C cannot confirm what sources The Age may have used to compile its report.

12) See answer to question eleven.

13) See answer to question eleven.

14) See answer to question eleven.

15) Nobody else had copies of the report.