

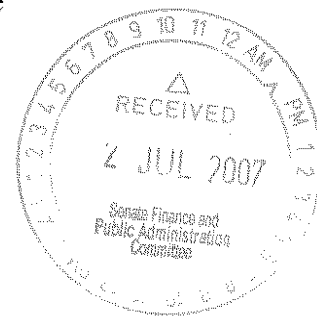
Senate Finance and Public Administration Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Australian Public Service Commission

Estimates 2007-08 – Budget Estimates, May 2007



Question: PM 35

Topic: Machinery of Government changes – consultation with staff on salary

Senator Wong asked: With whom is the negotiation regarding those transition arrangements?

For moves within the APS, in relation to remuneration, employees are entitled to their previous base salary or higher base salary applying to them in the gaining agency. Where an agency plans to make a Determination under s.24(1) of the *Public Service Act 1999* to preserve some or all of the other conditions of employment, an Agency Head is required to consult affected employees. These provisions are set out in Public Service Regulation 8.1.

Where an Agency Head does not make a s.24(1) determination, there are no specified consultation arrangements with staff affected by machinery of government changes. Typically it is the gaining agency which, having regard to the impact of the move, will assess the need to consult the staff.

The Commission provided additional material in writing to the Committee later on the day of hearings (22 May 2007). The material included reference to a joint Australian Public Service Commission, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) and the Department of Finance and Administration publication *Implementing Machinery of Government changes – A Good Practice Guide*, which is available on the Commission website.

The booklet sets out the arrangements that may apply to staff following machinery of government changes, including remuneration and conditions. It encourages agencies to establish constructive and open communications with staff.

As indicated in response to later questions on this issue, DEWR has policy responsibility for APS salary and employment conditions issues.