

Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Budget Estimates Hearing 26 May - 27 May 2008



Question: PM39

Outcome 1, Output 3

Topic: PM and staff contact with the Beijing AustChina Technology company

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Senator Fierravanti-Wells asked: And I will keep them succinct, if I can. I am particularly interested in the meetings in China, Minister, given the close association that the Prime Minister had and has with the Beijing AustChina Technology company and the extent of the sponsorship of his travel-I think it was about 16 trips for himself, members who are now ministers, and staff, and donations. I ask: during the trip, did the Prime Minister or anybody travelling with him have any contact with Mr Tang or any of this [or its parent] company's associates in China?

Senator Faulkner - Officials are not aware of the gentleman you mention attending any official functions, but I would like to be absolutely precise in my response to you. I appreciate that my answer is somewhat qualified, as it must be in these circumstances, so I think the best situation here is to take your question on notice so we can get you a precise answer to it.

Senator FIERRAVANTI-WELLS -... I would like-if you could, Minister-to make all efforts in relation to not only the Prime Minister but in particular the Prime Minister's staff or any other person that may have been travelling, to assure us that there was no contact or, if there was, of the nature of that contact.

Answer: There were no official or unofficial meetings with AustChina Technology by the Prime Minister, his staff or anyone travelling with him to China on 9-12 April 2008. The Prime Minister shook hands and exchanged courtesies with AustChina representative Mr James Greer at a China-Australia Chamber of Commerce dinner for around 400 guests on 10 April.