

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: PM92

Outcome 1, Output 5.7

Topic: Sustainability Group

Hansard Page: F&PA 128

Senator Allison asked: -If you could do that, please. One major omission, it seemed to me, was that there was no expertise in the sustainability group from people with knowledge and expertise in the design of sustainable cities, which was something of a surprise given the title of that stream. Do you know why this would be the case?

Mr Mrdak-Certainly the final report of the group has a great deal to say about sustainable cities. I am a little bit surprised by your comment about the lack of expertise in the group, because I presume-

Senator ALLISON-We might look into that as well. My reading of the people who were there indicates that there was not someone with that expertise. In fact, I think there was an individual who is fairly well known for criticising urban consolidation and has views that are quite at odds-some would argue, anyway-with sustainable city development.

Mr Mrdak-As I say, I am not aware of that issue. The co-chairs certainly looked very hard in their selection of people to get a balance of expertise and knowledge into the groups, and I am surprised by the suggestion that there might not have been expertise. But I am happy to look at the composition of the group and provide advice back to you in relation to the participants who were there.

Answer: While PM&C was not responsible for the selection of participants, the Sustainability stream included participants with backgrounds and experience in planning, engineering, architecture and sustainability, including participants who are on the Green Building Council of Australia.