

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 Hearing 25-29 May 2009

Question: PM55

Topic: Meal services offered on RAAF VIP flights transporting the Prime Minister

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Senator RONALDSON-Given the involvement of the Prime Minister's office in the public debate about this matter, Mr Mrdak, will you please take on notice my questions as to whether each VIP flight transporting the Prime Minister now includes a 24-hour supply of four-course meals; if not, what specific changes have been made to the meal service offered on RAAF VIP flights transporting the Prime Minister; and is the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet reimbursing Defence for these extra costs, or is Defence being forced to find savings in its own budget to cater for what I would view as the Prime Minister's excessive demands?

Senator Faulkner-Putting aside the political spin, particularly in the last question, I am happy to take on notice the questions you have read out-that is fine. I point out to you that a high proportion of those issues do not belong in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, as you would appreciate. If and where appropriate, I will suggest to PM&C that your questions perhaps be referred to another agency. I know you have specifically identified a PM&C role in one of them, but least some of those matters you have raised are not properly directed to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet-they are more properly directed to Defence. However, with the understanding that we will handle the necessary administrative arrangements in relation to reallocation of your questions, I am happy to take them on notice.

Answer: The Department of Defence advises it is not the case now, nor was it as at 26 May 2009, that Special Purpose Aircraft (SPA) flights transporting the Prime Minister include a 24-hour supply of four-course meals. Further questions relating to SPA flights should be directed to the Department of Defence.