

**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: PM75**

**Outcome 1, Output 3**

**Topic: PM75: Ashmore Reef incident**

**Type of Question: Hansard, F&PA 26 May p68**

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 10 July 2009**

**Number of pages: 1**

**Senator RONALDSON-Can I take you now, please-I am mindful of the time and the agency we have tonight-to the Ashmore Reef incident and the explosion on the illegal immigration vessel last month. I want to ask you about particularly the government's refusal to disclose information on this incident. In fairness, I probably prepared these questions a week or so ago in conjunction with my very hardworking staff. Has there been any further disclosure in relation to this incident in the last week that I might have missed?**

**Mr Mrdak-Senator, I am sorry; the officers who deal with these issues have left us because of that other commitment that they have gone to. Perhaps, if I might, I could take that on notice and come back to you, or we might deal with it separately when the officers are available later this afternoon?**

**Answer:** The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet is not aware of any disclosure in relation to this incident in the week 17 – 26 May 2009.

Senator the Hon Penny Wong represents the Minister for Home Affairs, the Hon Brendan O'Connor MP, in the Senate and is the designated spokesperson in the Senate for the Government on people smuggling and border security matters. Any further questions on this matter should be referred to Senator Wong.