

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: PM90

Topic: Discussions regarding contract with Mr Mulgan

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Senator RONALDSON-Did the Deputy Prime Minister's deputy chief of staff have any discussions with anyone within PM&C in relation to this contract?

Mr Mrdak-Not that I am aware of.

Senator RONALDSON-Can you make those inquiries, please.

Mr Mrdak-Certainly, but the decision to engage Mr Mulgan was made by the department.

Senator RONALDSON-You see, Mr Mrdak, when I see something like this it obviously rings immediate alarm bells for me after what we saw in relation to the CMAX affair. So you will take on notice whether there have been any discussions at all between Mr Bentley, the deputy chief of staff to Ms Gillard, and anyone within the Prime Minister's office or the department?

Answer: No departmental officer involved in contracting Dr Geoffrey Mulgan had discussions regarding the contract with any parties outside the Department, with the exception of Dr Mulgan himself. The Prime Minister's Office was not involved in the contracting process.