

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
BUDGET ESTIMATES 2011-2012

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
Outcome/Program: 1.1.1 - Domestic Policy
Topic: Public servants in PM&C advising on climate change policy

Senator: Abetz

Question reference number: 12

Type of question: Hansard, p 79, 23 May

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 8 July 2011

Number of pages: 1

Question:

Senator ABETZ: Thank you for that clarification. So no matter what the government's policy, and sure enough it has shifted a bit, the number of staff has remained constant over the past, let us say, 18 months. Would that be fair?

Dr Schreier: Broadly constant over that period. To be accurate I would have to go back and check the organisational structures back beyond 12 months ago when I joined the department myself, but it has been broadly constant.

Answer:

During the eighteen-month period from November 2009 to May 2011, the number of staff in the Climate Change Section in the Industry, Infrastructure and Environment Division of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) remained broadly constant. Four full-time officers worked on a broad range of climate change issues, including carbon pricing, renewable energy, energy efficiency and adaptation. During some of that period, for short consecutive periods of three months each, graduate employees were also placed in the section.

In addition, during the period other officers from the International, Economic and Strategy and Delivery Divisions and members of the Senior Executive Service of PM&C also contributed to the development of advice on climate change issues. However, the number of officers engaged in this activity varied depending on the workload at particular points in time.

The number of staff in the Climate Change Section is currently five which includes an additional staff member that commenced in May 2011.