

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: Consultation with the not-for-profit sector

Senator: Siewert

Question reference number: 25

Type of question: Hansard, p 95, 23 May

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

Number of pages: 1

Question:

Senator SIEWERT: Are you talking to the not-for-profit sector already about it?

Ms Cross: I think that at this stage it is a discussion within government while the government considers its response.

Senator SIEWERT: Okay, and what is the timeline for talking to the not-for-profit sector about it?

Mr Ronalds: We can take on notice what consultation arrangements have already been put in place. Again, it is an issue that goes across the whole of government, so I would imagine that a range of agencies are engaged and we would need to take that on notice.

Answer:

The Government is working with key stakeholders to provide further information to Fair Work Australia (FWA) to assist in determining appropriate wage rates for social and community services (SACS) workers.

The Government has established the Community Sector Wages Group (CSWG), coordinated by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, to examine how to manage the potential implications of pay increases which may be awarded by FWA in the case. The CSWG is chaired by Senator the Hon Jacinta Collins, Parliamentary Secretary for Workplace Relations, and is comprised of representatives of the Australian Government, the SACS sector (including the Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) and not-for-profit organisations), the ACTU and industry unions and state and territory governments. The CSWG met for the first time on Monday 6 June 2011. Cassandra Goldie from ACOSS is a member of the CSWG and the Not-For-Profit Sector Reform Council, providing a linkage to the Government's wider not-for-profit reform agenda.

On 24 June 2011, FWA convened a conference between the parties to discuss the matters addressed in FWA's preliminary decision of 16 May 2011.