

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates Hearing 21-24 May 2012

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Outcome/Program: 1.1.1 Domestic Policy

Topic: COAG - Business Advisory forum Meetings

Senator: Senator Di Natale

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Question:

Senator DI NATALE: Can you inform me whom the Prime Minister may have met with in the lead-up to the meeting?

Ms Cross: I think we would have to take that on notice. I am not aware of whom the Prime Minister may or may not have met with.

Senator Chris Evans: Senator, how do you mean? Do you mean just prior to the meeting, or the days or weeks leading up to the meeting? I am not quite sure what you mean.

Senator DI NATALE: Any communication relating to the forum in the weeks leading up to the meeting.

Senator Chris Evans: We can take that on notice. She would bump into a lot of these people on a regular basis but, specifically in relation to the forum purposes, we can take that on notice.

Senator DI NATALE: Okay. Was minister Burke consulted on the communique?

Ms Cross: Again, I would have to check. As I said, I understand that the finalisation of the communique was part of the discussions at the meeting? I do not believe Minister Burke was at the meeting? and that was actually done in the room. Whether there were discussions outside of the meeting, I would have to check.

Answer:

The Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet is not able to comment on any private meetings the Prime Minister might have had with representatives of the business community prior to the day of the meeting.

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The Government's approach was determined by the relevant Ministers prior to the meeting including the Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities, the Hon Tony Burke MP.

Minister Burke's department was consulted prior to the Business Advisory forum meeting.

The communique was settled during the course of the Business Advisory forum meeting.