

**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:** 1.1.4 Support Services for Government Operations

**Topic:** Member for Fisher (the Speaker) - meetings with the leader of Government in the House

**Senator:** Senator the Hon Ronaldson

**Question reference number:** 67

**Type of Question:** FPA P94, 21 May 2012

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** 6 July 2012

**Number of pages:** 1

**Question:**

Senator RONALDSON: Similarly, I would like that information on the Leader of the House.

Senator Chris Evans: Again, Senator, I think you ought to think about this. These are Prime Minister and Cabinet estimates. The suggestion that the department should go around asking current and former ministers when they met with Mr Slipper and how is probably a bit beyond the reach of PMandC estimates.

Senator RONALDSON: With the greatest respect, Minister, Mr Albanese is the government Leader of the House and, as such, I do not think there is any reason at all why you are not in a position, on behalf of the government, to ask the government leader in the House what contact he had with the member for Fisher, on what occasions, how many times and what was discussed, and to ask questions of the staff of the Leader of the House along those same lines. I am sure you are not suggesting that the Leader of the House is not subject to questions through these estimates.

Senator Chris Evans: Well, to do it through the PMandC estimates, I probably would suggest that. I am happy to take further advice. If you have questions for Mr Albanese in terms of his portfolio responsibilities, obviously his own portfolio's estimates would be the time to pursue those.

**Answer:**

Questions about matters related to the Leader of the House should be put to the Leader of the House in the appropriate forum.