

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Finance and Administration Portfolio

Department of Finance and Administration

Supplementary Estimates 2002-2003 – 20 November 2002

Question: F55 & F56

Outcome 3, Output 3.1

Topic: MOP(S) Staff Salaries

Hansard Page: F&PA 72 & 73

Senator Ray asked:

Could you indicate to me how many times you have: (a) been requested to exercise this discretion, and (b) actually exercised the discretion?

Without revealing the staff member, you might indicate the two circumstances in which this permission (appointment of Electorate staff above the range) was given. In other words, I don't want to know the staff member's name in this case but their employer.

Answer:

(a) As at 20 November 2002 there has been approximately 15 requests from Senators and Members to Senator Abetz since his appointment as Special Minister of State on 30 January 2001 to exercise this discretion.

(b) As advised to the Committee by the Special Minister of State at the hearing on 20 November 2002 (Hansard page F&PA 72) the Minister has exercised this discretion twice.

There were two approved requests for the appointment of an electorate officer at other than the base of the salary range.

Both requests were seen to represent exceptional circumstances and took into account the roles and responsibilities of the employing Senator/Member and the skills and experience of the individuals concerned.