

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Budget Estimates Hearings 2004-2005, 24 and 25 May 2004

Question: PM 5

Outcome 1, Output 3.1.

Topic: Human Cloning

Direct on Notice

Senator Harradine asked:

- 1. I understand that the Government's position at the United Nations on human cloning was communicated to the Minister responsible for human cloning issues, Kevin Andrews, in a letter from the Prime Minister dated 19 September 2003. Please provide a copy of this letter.**
- 2. Minister Andrews was advised of the Australian Government's position by letter on 19 September 2003, just over ten days before Professor Pettigrew addressed the United Nations on 30 September 2003. But Professor Pettigrew had also addressed the UN on 23 September 2002 to put Australia's position. How was the Minister for Aging consulted before 23 September 2002 on the Government's position?**
- 3. Why wasn't the Minister responsible for human cloning involved in formulating Australia's position at the United Nations?**
- 4. Which Minister's other than the Prime Minister were involved in formulating Australia's position at the United Nations? How were they involved?**

Answer:

- 1. A copy of the Prime Minister's letter of 19 September 2003 has been provided to Senator Harradine.**
- 2. This is a matter for the Department of Health and Ageing.**
- 3. See answer to (4) below.**
- 4. The United Nations General Assembly has been considering the issue of human cloning since 2002. Discussions have been fluid and, as yet, countries, including Australia, have not been required to formalise their positions by supporting a particular outcome. As discussions have evolved, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Department of Health and Ageing, the National Health and Medical Research Council, the Department of Industry, Tourism and**

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Resources and the Attorney-General's Department have been involved in considering Australia's response to these developments. It is the responsibility of each agency to brief its own minister. The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet has briefed the Prime Minister on this issue.