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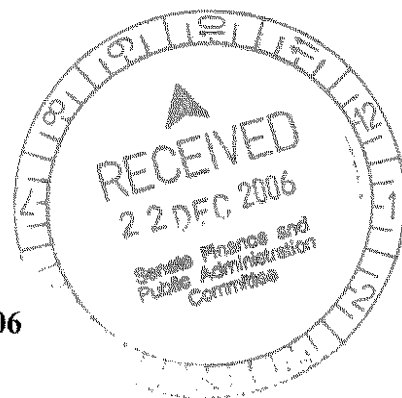
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CANBERRA, A.C.T. 2600

Mr Alistair Sands
Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600



SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES HEARINGS 30-31 OCTOBER 2006 – CLARIFICATION OF THE RECORD.

Dear Mr Sands

At the supplementary estimates hearings on 30 October 2006, Senator Evans asked me a number of questions relating to the Uranium Mining, Processing and Nuclear Energy Review. These are identified as questions PM18, PM19, PM20 and PM78.

Question PM18 has been answered separately. After reviewing the transcript and consulting with your office, the following further clarification is submitted in relation to questions PM19, PM20 and PM78.

PM19

Answer (given in session, F&PA89): You asked also about the overseas travel of the panel of task force members. They undertook a trip in September this year for 18 days. They visited Finland, the Ukraine, the UK, France, Canada, the USA, Korea and Japan. The final costs are not available yet but so far the estimated cost is about \$200,000.

Senator CHRIS EVANS—So that is the travel cost?

Ms Goddard—That is the travel cost. All six panel members went, though they did not all go to all locations. They split up and went to different places and I think a few secretariat staff travelled with the panel.

Clarification: only five of the six panel members went; Dr Arthur Johnston did not travel overseas for the Review.

PM20 (and PM78)

The answer to PM20 was given in session (F&PA89) but a further question - PM78 - was then asked:—Senator Evans asked me a number of questions about the nuclear task force, which I am able to give some answers to. Senator, you asked about the consultancies that had been let by the task force.

Three have been let to date. One is a study being undertaken by the Electric Power Research Institute in the United States at a cost of \$US60,000—

Senator CHRIS EVANS—It is a US company?

Ms Goddard—Yes, it is a US research institute. That one is doing an expert review of international studies comparing the economics of electricity generation technologies.

Senator CHRIS EVANS—Do you know whether that is a private company or is it attached to one of the universities? (see supplementary answer under PM78 below).

Ms Goddard—I do not know, I am afraid. It is a research institute so I suspect it is—

Senator CHRIS EVANS—Do you know where in America it is based?

Ms Goddard—No, I do not. I can find out for you (see supplementary answer under PM78 below). Then there is one that has been commissioned from Sydney university at an estimated cost of \$A79,233. That is for an expert analysis of the energy use and greenhouse gas emissions associated with the nuclear fuel cycle. The third one is being done by ABARE, the Australian Bureau of Agriculture and Resource Economics. The cost is being shared half-half with the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources at a total cost of \$A110,000—\$55,000 for the task force.

ABARE has been commissioned to help assess the prospects for development of Australia's uranium industry.

PM78

Supplementary answer: The Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI) is based in Palo Alto, California, USA. EPRI describes itself as “an independent, non-profit centre for public interest energy and environmental research”. Most of EPRI's members are electric power utilities in the USA.

Clarification of two other answers (matters outside the questions on notice).

I wish to clarify two other answers I gave on 30 October.

I said (F&PA89) that Dr Johnston was a late appointee. Professor Peter Johnston was the late appointee, not Dr Arthur Johnston (both are members of the taskforce).

In answering Senator Evans' question (F&PA90-91) “Is any more travel expected?”, I said “Not that I am aware of. No overseas travel...”

To be precise, taskforce member Professor Peter Johnston travelled to Belgium on university business at the beginning of November. The cost of additional travel from Belgium to France and the United Kingdom on taskforce business was met from the taskforce budget. (Professor Johnston discussed nuclear fuel reprocessing in France and radiation protection and safety training in the United Kingdom). The taskforce will not be paying for Professor Johnston's travel costs from Australia to Belgium and return.

I trust this information will be of assistance to the committee.

Yours sincerely



Jenny Goddard
Deputy Secretary

20 December 2006