

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Supplementary Budget Estimates 18-21 October 2010

Question: PM35

Topic: Three programs: Green Loans, BER and Home Insulation Program

Asked By: Senator Bernardi

Type of Question: FPA 101, 18 October

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 3 December 2010

Number of pages: 2

Senator BERNARDI-To recap: Mr Cahill, I think you said that the decision about the reporting is a decision of Prime Minister and Cabinet?

Mr Cahill-In terms of the arrangements of any reporting, generally the Prime Minister and Cabinet will set the parameters for our department.

Senator Chris Evans-I think the audit office obviously do not have visibility about the Cabinet Implementation Unit but I am happy to take on notice the intent of your question, which is really what oversight they had of those three programs. I do not personally know but I am happy to take that on notice, because it really was a question that should have gone to PM&C. So I am happy to take-

Senator BERNARDI-It only came out as a result of the questioning-

Senator Chris Evans-And they have gone. I am happy to take it on notice so at least you will get an answer formally that is right; not that I am saying the officers are misleading you, but we will get that clear.

Senator BERNARDI-No, that is all right. I would also appreciate, Minister, if you will take on notice if there are perhaps some formal guidelines as to instructions for reporting requirements according to programs.

Senator Chris Evans-Which programs are monitored in that way; yes.

Senator BERNARDI-Yes.

Senator Chris Evans-I will take it on notice and see what we have.

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Answer:

The Cabinet Implementation Unit's (CIU) primary role is to provide advice and support to the Prime Minister and the Cabinet in relation to the management and implementation of the Government's strategic policy initiatives. Over the past few years the CIU has monitored a wide range of initiatives involving multiple portfolios.

In accordance with the practices adopted by the previous government, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet is unable to provide information about the initiatives being monitored by the CIU as its reports are specifically prepared for, and provided to, the Cabinet or a Cabinet committee.

The CIU's monitoring responsibilities are determined by the Prime Minister and Cabinet, with specific reporting arrangements for each initiative agreed with agencies on a case-by-case basis.