

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: PM68

Asked By: Senator Kroger

Topic: Additional staff awarded to independent members

Type of Question: Written

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

Number of pages:

- a) **Which members of parliament currently have been allocated additional staff?**
- b) **Who are these members and how many additional staff do they currently employ?**
- c) **Is it correct that additional staff were allocated to the members for New England, Lyne and Denison but not to the crossbench members of the Greens?**
- d) **Is it correct that no additional staff were allocated to the members for Kennedy and O'Connor?**
- e) **I understand that the agreements between the ALP and the members for New England, Lyne and Denison contain the provision that current staffing levels are temporary solutions until it is finalised how much support is considered appropriate.**
- f) **Can department advise on the current status of this process.**
 - i. **If staffing provisions are finalised, what is the outcome? Who took the decision? Is this a special deal for the members for New England, Lyne and Denison? Will this agreement be extended to the members for Kennedy and O'Connor?**
 - ii. **If staffing provisions are not finalised yet, can you please advise on the timeline and when the decision is expected?**

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Answer:

In relation to a) through d), the Department notes that the Department of Finance and Deregulation tabled a document setting out the allocation of a range of personal positions including those for members of parliament in a hearing of the Committee on 19 October 2010. The document has been published on the Parliament House website at:

http://www.aph.gov.au/senate/committee/fapa_ctte/estimates/sup_1011/Finance_1c.pdf

In relation to e) and f), after considering their requests for additional staff, the Government Staffing Committee recommended that one extra staff position be made available to Mr Windsor, Mr Oakeshott and Mr Wilkie beyond those specified in the Agreements with them. Staffing resources for the Member for Kennedy, the Member for O'Connor and the Australian Greens are currently under consideration.