

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: PM69

Asked By: Senator Kroger

Topic: Climate Change Committee

Type of Question: Written

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

Number of pages: 9

- a) Please advise who was present at the first meeting of the multi-party Climate Change Committee held on October 7. What was the outcome of this meeting.**
- b) How often will the committee meet?**
- c) Where will the committee meet? Is it planned to hold these meeting in Canberra only or will there be a kind of road show similar to the Community Cabinet Meetings?**
- d) Who covers the costs of the meetings and what is the budget?**
- e) What kind of secretarial support does the committee receive?**
- f) Will external experts (in addition to advisers Professor Ross Garnaut, Professor Will Steffen, Mr Rod Sims and Ms Patricia Faulkner) be invited and heard?**

If so, who are they?

If so, will their involvement in the committee involve costing fees?

If so, what has been budgeted?

- g) I understand that Professor Ross Garnaut, Professor Will Steffen, Mr Rod Sims and Ms Patricia Faulkner will also be on the committee as expert advisers. Are these advisers to receive consulting fees? If yes, how much? What are the budgeted travel costs?**

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- h) Will all four expert advisors be present at each monthly committee meeting? If not, what is their involvement?**
- i) I understand from the Terms of References number 6.1. that Professor Garnaut will be asked to update his white paper on climate change. Does this mean there will be a new version of the white paper commissioned? What costs are involved?**
- j) Is the climate change committee entitled to commission reports, audits and/or reviews? If so, what are the guidelines for this?**
- k) Will the meetings be reported and minuted? If so, which office will administer and file these minutes?**
- l) What is the FOI status of these minutes?**
- m) Will the operations, conduct and findings of the committee be published?**
- n) How can this committee have cabinet status if it is not a cabinet sub-committee as highlighted by PM Gillard in the following quote she made in the transcript of Press Conference on October 7:**

JOURNALIST: There has been criticism that the Climate Change Committee is shrouded in secrecy, how much information will you be releasing, after each meeting, in the Communiqué? Will it be substantial information or it will it basically be housekeeping?

PM: Well, I think we should be very clear about this, and I do want to be very clear. The Multi-Party Climate Change Committee is going to work in a manner comparable to a cabinet sub-committee. **It is not a cabinet sub-committee but it will work in a comparable manner.** That means, of course, that outcomes from the Committee will be publically announced. The Committee, from time to time, will choose to publish work for the public to digest but discussions in the room will be confidential.

AND

JOURNALIST: (inaudible) of the Citizens' Assembly, or did you let it go meekly?

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PM: Well as I've just said to you, **this is a Committee working akin to a Cabinet Committee in terms of information protocols**, so discussions in the Committee are confidential Phil, you'll just have to die wondering.

Answer:

a) The following were present at the Multi-Party Climate Change Committee meeting on 7 October 2010:

Committee members

The Hon Julia Gillard MP (Chair)

The Hon Greg Combet AM MP (Co-Deputy Chair)

Senator Bob Brown

Senator Christine Milne (Co-Deputy Chair)

Mr Tony Windsor MP

The Hon Wayne Swan MP and Mr Rob Oakeshott MP sent their apologies.

Expert advisors

Mr Rod Sims

Professor Ross Garnaut AO

Professor Will Steffen

Ms Patricia Faulkner AO

Members assisting the committee

The Hon Mark Dreyfus QC MP

Mr Adam Bandt MP

In addition, a small number of departmental and ministerial advisers were also present to support the Committee and record its deliberations.

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The outcomes of this meeting were released in a communiqué (attached) which is available on the Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency's web site (www.climatechange.gov.au).

b) The Committee has agreed to meet regularly, usually monthly, until the end of 2011 at which time the ongoing need for the Committee will be considered.

c) Item 12 of the Committee Terms of Reference indicate the Committee would generally meet in the Cabinet Room at Parliament House.

d) The Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency provides Secretariat support to the Committee with the assistance of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

As announced by the Minister for Climate Change and Energy Efficiency, the Hon Greg Combet AM MP, and the Parliamentary Secretary for Climate Change and Energy Efficiency, the Hon Mark Dreyfus QC MP, on 9 November 2010, funding of \$5.2 million has been allocated in the 2010-11 Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook to establish the Committee and update the Garnaut Climate Change Review.

e) See response to part (d).

f) The invitation for additional experts to attend Committee meetings or to provide advice to the Committee is a matter for the Committee to determine.

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- g) The four expert advisors to the Committee will receive remuneration, including travel expenses, for their work with the Committee in accordance with *Remuneration Tribunal Determination 2010/11: Remuneration and Allowances for Holders of Part-Time Public Office* and *Remuneration Tribunal 2004/3: Official Travel by Office Holders* (as amended by Determination 2010/8).
- h) It is expected that all four expert advisors will be present at each monthly meeting, although this is a matter for the Committee to determine.
- i) Professor Ross Garnaut has been invited to update the Garnaut Climate Change Review that he published in September 2008, not to be confused with the Government's Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme White Paper released in December 2008. The update to the Garnaut Climate Change Review is being funded out of the \$5.2 million allocated to establish the Committee.
- j) This is a matter for the consideration of the Committee.
- k) Yes. The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and the Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency (DCCEE) will both be responsible for minute-taking. The DCCEE-based Secretariat will administer and file these minutes. The Committee agreed at the first meeting that a communiqué would be released after each meeting.
- l) The application of the FOI Act to individual documents falling within the scope of an FOI request is a matter for consideration by each decision-maker on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the Act.

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- m) The Committee will release a communiqué after each meeting, as part of its role in building public consensus for action on climate change and public understanding of the issues surrounding carbon pricing. From time to time, it will also release information papers that were provided to Committee members, as a means of informing the public and encouraging public debate. A website has also been established on the Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency's website containing public information about the Committee and its work.
- n) The Multi-Party Climate Change Committee is not a Cabinet sub-committee.