

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates 17-20 October 2011

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Outcome/Program: 1.1.4 Support Services for Government Operations

Topic: Information provided to PM&C from the Ombudsman

Senator: Senator Faulkner

Question reference number: 11

Type of Question: FPA, p 66, 17 October

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 2 December 2011

Number of pages: 1

Question:

Senator FAULKNER: So the Office of the Ombudsman contacted PMandC about questions that had been placed on notice. Were the draft answers to the questions on notice provided to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet?

Ms Leon: The question on notice sought copies of communication, so in that sense they were not draft answers to questions; they were copies of the documents that the Office of the Ombudsman intended to provide to the committee in answer to the question. They were copies of all the documents that fell within the scope of that request. They provided us with copies of those.

Senator FAULKNER: I suppose that is a matter for interpretation, but I do appreciate the point that you make. Was all the material that was provided in answer to the question on notice provided to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet?

Ms Leon: In advance, yes.

Senator FAULKNER: Can you say when, please? Let me be a little clearer: not when it was provided by the Ombudsman's office but when it was received by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. I think that is really all I can ask you.

Ms Leon: I think it was on 30 September—either the 29th or 30th. I can take that exact date on notice.

Answer: The Deputy Ombudsman forwarded some of the documents that constituted the response to the Committee's question on notice to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet on 29 September 2011. The complete set of documents that was provided in response to the Committee was received in the department at 1.34 pm on 30 September 2011. These documents were provided in the context of the Ombudsman's Office consulting this department about the question on notice.