

# Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

## ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

### SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES 2011-2012

#### Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

**Department/Agency:** Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

**Outcome/Program:** 1.1.2 National Security and International Policy

**Topic:** Incoming Government Brief - Consultation between DFAT and PM&C

**Senator:** Senator Ryan

**Question reference number:** 25

**Type of Question:** F&PA, p 79, 17 October

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

**Number of pages:** 1

#### Question:

Senator RYAN: Dr McCarthy, I quickly have another question about my previous issue. Did the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade write that advice to the incoming government without consulting the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, or was the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet consulted about that advice?

Dr McCarthy: Not to my knowledge.

Senator RYAN: I would appreciate if someone could take on notice if you might not have been in the capacity?

Senator Chris Evans: Are you are really asking whether there is coordination across departments for incoming government briefs?

Senator RYAN: My understanding is that central agencies do have some influence over incoming government briefs from line agencies.

Senator Chris Evans: No, that is what you are after? The question is whether they were consulted about the brief.

Senator RYAN: Yes.

Dr McCarthy: I can take that on notice.

#### Answer:

Agencies may discuss the strategic issues that could be raised in their respective Incoming Government Briefs (IGBs), however final advice and clearance of content within IGBs is a matter for the relevant portfolio secretary. The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet was not consulted on the specifics of the 2010 IGB prepared by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.