

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: Lobbying Code of Conduct - 2010 Round Table

Senator: Senator Rhiannon

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Type of Question: Written

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Question:

What information was collected as a result of the 2010 Lobbying Round Table and subsequent submissions to the discussion paper which led to the decision not to expand the definition of 'lobbyist' in the Code to include in-house lobbyists?

Answer:

The Lobbying Code of Conduct (the Code) and Lobbying Register were established to improve transparency in the third-party lobbying sector. The Code applies to lobbyists who act on behalf of third-party clients so as to ensure that ministers and senior officials are aware of whose interests are being promoted. It does not apply to government relations staff employed in major companies or peak industry groups, for example, as the nature of their employment means that it will be clear to government representatives whose interests they will be representing.

Feedback from the round table informed the discussion paper circulated in July 2010. While the discussion paper indicated that the inclusion of in-house lobbyists under the Code had been raised at the round table, there was limited support for the extension of the Code and the Government considered that, given the intended purpose of the Code, a fundamental change of that nature was not warranted.