

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

Supplementary Budget Estimates 15-18 October 2012

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

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

**Outcome/Program:** 1.1.1 Domestic Policy

**Topic:** Super Trawler

**Senator:** Senator the Hon Ronaldson

**Question reference number:** 28

**Type of Question:** Written

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** 30 November 2012

**Number of pages:** 2

**Question:**

In addition to the matters already taken on notice in Proof Hansard, 15 October 2012, pp. 103-108, particularly noting where Ms Marie Taylor stated that "I believe I have seen that legal advice" given to Mr Burke regarding the super-trawler:

- a. Can the department now confirm that it has seen this legal advice? If so, when did the department see this legal advice?
- b. Ms Taylor mentioned that "we were in discussions with both of those different departments during the lead-up". What were the dates of each of these discussions and what were each of these discussions about? What were the conclusions from each of these discussions?
- c. What recommendations were made by the department to Minister Burke and/or his department regarding how to act on that legal advice?
- d. Were possible actions recommended to Minister Burke and/or his department about how to ban and/or hinder or reduce the operations of the super-trawler Abel Tasman?
- e. Were discussions held with respect to taking action that contradicted the scientific evidence on the super-trawler given by the experts on the AFMA commission who approved the decision (which enabled the Abel Tasman to fish in the first place)?
- f. Were discussions held with respect to the potential consequences of going against this science-based advice, particularly for others thinking about investing in Australia?

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

Supplementary Budget Estimates 15-18 October 2012

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

**Answer:**

- (a) Yes. 17 August 2012.
- (b) Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet officers met representatives from the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) on 24 August 2012 and 29 August 2012 to discuss preparation of advice to the Government about the activities of the FV Abel Tasman.
- (c) to (f) the Department provides a range of advice to relevant Ministers and agencies. Consideration of policy is a matter for the Australian Government.