

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES 2016-17

Finance Portfolio
28 February 2017

Department/Agency: Finance
Outcome/Program: General
Topic: Flag protocol

Senator: Abetz

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Question:

Senator ABETZ: I have just got a very quick brief topic, a matter that was brought to my attention by a staff member of Finance. What is the protocol with flying flags in the Department of Finance and in the foyer?

Ms Huxtable: I might have to take that on notice, but we would adhere to the government guidelines in that regard. I believe I have someone here who may be able to help you.

...

Mr Hirschfeld: The PM&C protocol specifies flag protocols for the flags that are flown outside the building.

Senator ABETZ: Outside the building; not inside the building.

Mr Hirschfeld: Not to my knowledge, but we can check that.

...

Senator ABETZ: Can you take on notice: who is actually responsible? With whom does the buck stop? Who makes the actual decision as to what flags are flown?

...

Ms Huxtable: ...I can certainly raise this issue with the executive board at their next meeting, and we can discuss a way in which we can make this decision in the future.

Senator ABETZ: If you could provide with a copy of the relevant minutes of the executive board that made the determination in relation to the flying of this particular flag, that would be very helpful.

Ms Huxtable: I will seek to do that.

Answer:

The department follows the protocols set by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet regarding the flying of flags at the front of Commonwealth buildings.

The Finance Department's LGBTI staff network has a rainbow flag, which is used at network events. When not in use the flag has been stored in one of the two lift foyers. As an inclusive employer and consistent with its Diversity Action Plan, the Executive Board has agreed to support a number of staff networks across the department, including their preferred way to be acknowledged as important contributors to the department.