

Senate Finance and Public Administration Standing Committee
Answers to Questions on Notice
Supplementary Budget Estimates, 20-22 October 2008



Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet

Department/Agency: ANAO
Outcome/Output Group: 1
Topic: CMAX investigation

Senator: Ronaldson
Question reference number: PM37a- PM37d
Type of question: Written
Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 5 December 2008

Question:

37a: Has any staffer, past or present, in the Department of PM&C, been interviewed by the Australian National Audit Office in relation to the awarding of the media management contract for the 2020 Summit to CMAX?

Answer:

Since audit fieldwork commenced in early September 2008, ANAO officers have met a number of times with officials in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPM&C) and interviewed officials concerning matters relevant to the conduct of the audit. In addition, interviews have been undertaken during November 2008 with various other individuals, including with certain officials currently or formerly engaged by DPM&C.

Question:

37b: Has any staffer, past or present, in the PMO, been interviewed by the Australian National Audit Office in relation to the awarding of the media management contract for the 2020 Summit to CMAX? Which PMO staff?

Answer:

Yes. In November 2008, ANAO interviewed the staff member in the Prime Minister's Office who had recommended CMAX Communications to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet as a possible supplier of media management services for the Summit.

Question:

37c: Has the ANAO completed a draft report into this investigation? If yes: could it please be provided to the committee, if no: when does the ANAO expect to have one completed?

Answer:

The proposed report under Section 19 of the Auditor-General Act has been prepared. Our current timetable involves the report being tabled in late January or early February 2009.

The audit is being conducted as a General Performance Audit under Section 18 of the Auditor-General Act. Section 19 of the Act provides that a copy of the proposed report of an audit conducted under Section 18 may be given to any person who, in the Auditor-General's opinion, has a special interest in the report. In addition, the proposed report, or extracts of the proposed report, may also be provided to a relevant third party if they are mentioned in the report so as to meet obligations in relation to procedural fairness. Draft reports are not provided to Parliamentary Committees but the ANAO is available to brief committees following the tabling of reports.

Question:

37d: Will the ANAO provide a draft of the report to the Minister, PMO and/or the Department prior to its release?

Answer:

Given the objectives of the audit are focused on the appointment by DPM&C of CMAX Communications Pty Ltd and DPM&C's subsequent administration of the contract, the Department is one of the parties that has received a copy of the proposed report. Other recipients of the report include the staff member of the Prime Minister's Office who had recommended CMAX Communications to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet as a possible supplier of media management services. A copy of the proposed report has not been provided by ANAO to the Minister.

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