

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES - 27 FEBRUARY 2014 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Human Services

Topic: Ministerial Leave

Question reference number: HS 91

Senator: Ludwig

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 24 April 2014

Number of pages: 2

Question:

Was the minister on leave at any point during the Christmas break (between the last sitting of parliament in 2013 and the first sitting in 2014)? If so:

- a) Please table a schedule of the minister's leave. Please include:
 - 1) The dates the minister was on leave.
 - 2) The dates the minister was out of the country (if applicable).
- b) Who was acting in the minister's place?
 - 1) What date was it decided to have this person act in the minister's place?
 - 2) What was the process for selecting this person?
 - 3) Who was involved in making this decision?
- c) Were there any matters with which the department needed to make contact with the minister during this time? If so:
 - 1) Please provide a list of these matters and the date they occurred.
 - 2) Please provide a copy of any correspondence, emails, notes etc between the minister and the department during this time.
 - 3) Were there any times that the department was aware that it would be unable to communicate with the minister?
 - 4) Were there any times that the department tried to contact the minister but were unable?
- d) Were there any matters with which the department needed to make contact with the acting minister during this time? If so:
 - 1) Please provide a list of these matters and the date they occurred.
 - 2) Please provide a copy of any correspondence, emails, notes etc between the acting minister and the department during this time.
 - 3) Were there any times that the department was aware that it would be unable to communicate with the acting minister?
 - 4) Were there any times that the department tried to contact the acting minister but were unable?

- e) Did the department contact the Minister or acting minister during this time? If so:
- 1) Please provide a list of these matters and the date they occurred
 - 2) Please provide a copy of any correspondence, emails, notes etc between the minister and or acting minister and the department during this time.

Answer:

- a) 1) The Minister was on leave for the period of 26 December 2013 to 12 January 2014
- 2) The Minister was overseas for the period of 3 to 10 January 2014.
- b) No acting Minister was appointed during this period. The Hon Kevin Andrews MP, Minister for Social Services has overall responsibility for the Social Services portfolio.
- c) No.
- d) Not applicable.
- e) No.