

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice
Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearings October 2015
Communications Portfolio
Department of Communications and the Arts

Question No: 23

Program 1.1

Hansard Ref: Written, 30/10/2015

Topic: Change in Prime Minister

Senator Ludwig, Joe asked:

After the change in Prime Minister in September 2015, it was widely reported that it took the former Prime Minister (Mr Abbott) and his staff quite some time to vacate the Prime Ministerial office. It was also reported that during this time, the New Prime Minister (Mr Turnbull) operated out of his old office (Communication Minister's office). One such article is available here: <http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/office-politics-tony-abbotts-staff-slow-to-leave-their-old-digs-20150917-gjpada.html>

The following questions relate to these reports:

1. Did the department provide any additional furniture, equipment, IT, etc to Prime Minister Turnbull or his office to use in the Communication Minister's office between his election to the leadership and his move into the Prime Minister's office? If yes, please provide a list of items and include:
 - (a) Was the item in stock or purchased for this purpose?
 - (b) Value of item.
 - (c) What was the need for the item?
 - (d) Was it requested by the Prime Minister's office? If no, then who requested it?
2. Did the department provide any stationery to Prime Minister Turnbull or his office to use in the Communication Minister's office between his election to the leadership and his move into the Prime Minister's office? If yes, please provide a list of items and include:
 - (a) Was the item in stock or purchased for this purpose?
 - (b) Value of item.
 - (c) When the item was requested.
 - (d) Who requested the item.
3. What support was provided by the department to Mr Turnbull and his office to make the Communication Minister's office viable for Prime Ministerial duties during this period?
4. What IT arrangements were in place during this time to allow Mr Turnbull's office access to the Prime Ministerial IT system?
 - (a) Please provide a detailed cost break down of these arrangements.
 - (b) Were there any limitations that prohibited Mr Turnbull accessing certain IT systems during this time? If yes, please detail.
5. Did Mr Turnbull or his office continue to use the Communications IT system during this period? If yes, please detail what was used.

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6. How many department of Communications staff were available to Mr Turnbull during this period?

Answer:

1. No
2. No
3. None
4. This question is better directed to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.
5. Yes. Prime Minister Turnbull also remained the Minister for Communications until 21 September 2015, and as such, the Office continued to utilise Department of Communications IT systems and equipment.
6. Two Departmental Liaison Officers.