

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Additional Estimates 23-27 February 2015

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Outcome/Program: Outcome 1: Prime Minister and Cabinet

Topic: Access to cabinet-in-confidence by backbenchers

Senator: Senator the Hon Penny Wong

Question reference number: 3

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Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 10 April 2015

Number of pages: 1

Question:

Senator WONG: In relation to my cabinet-in-confidence question about backbench chairs, you said, I think, 'Not to my knowledge,' or, "Not that I'm aware of." I do not want to put words in your mouth, but I think you were not sure. Can you take that on notice as to whether or not they will have access to cabinet-in-confidence material. I am just asking you to take it on notice.

Mr Fox: I can certainly say that we in the Cabinet Secretariat have not been asked to make available any such documents to backbench chairs, so the answer to the question is no, not to my knowledge.

Senator WONG: You do not want to take it on notice? All right, I will ask the minister. Could you take on notice whether or not the backbench chairs will have access to any cabinet-in-confidence material. I understand Mr Fox to be saying, from the department's perspective, the answer is no. Is that right?

Mr Fox: That is correct.

Senator Abetz: Happy to take it on notice.

Answer:

No.