

**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:** Question 1411

**Senator:** Senator the Hon Penny Wong

**Question reference number:** 23

**Type of question:** FPA Monday 23 February 2015, page 75 & 7

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

**Number of pages:** 1

**Question:**

Senator WONG: I note that in response to a question of mine, question No. 1411 to you, Senator Abetz, the answer provided was: the comments referred to are not the view of the government. Have any members of the Prime Minister's staff been sanctioned over the negative backgrounding in relation to Dr Watt?

Senator Abetz: I can take that on notice but I would suspect not, because this is not a fact; it is an assertion. And one of the descriptors I would actually agree with—that Dr Watt is very ethical.

**Answer:**

Ministerial Staff are required to comply with the Statement of Standards for Ministerial Staff.

As outlined in Parliamentary Question 1411, the Government has the utmost respect for Dr Watt and his longstanding contribution to the public service.