

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: Future submarine program

Senator: Senator the Hon Penny Wong

Question reference number: 41

Type of question: FPA Monday 23 February 2015, page 107

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

Number of pages: 1

Question:

Senator WONG: That is not quite correct. But we are talking about you and your government and the announcement on 20 February. Are you saying to me you do not want to tell us whether the cabinet or the National Security Committee met to determine the acquisition which was then announced by the defence minister?

Dr McCarthy: There was a decision-making process but, as Ms Cross has pointed out, we do not normally confirm the exact details of the process. There was a decision-making process.

Senator WONG: Was there a cabinet decision or not?

Dr McCarthy: There was a government decision. As the media release from Minister Andrews points out, the government announced the acquisition strategy—

Senator WONG: I am pressing—and I will press again in the Senate—to find out whether there was a cabinet decision on this process.

Ms Cross: We are happy to take that on notice. As I said, we do not normally indicate that; it is normally a minister's decision.

Senator WONG: Minister?

Senator Abetz: We will take it on notice and determine our response in due course, keeping in mind that we inherited a blank sheet of paper in relation to this acquisition.

Answer:

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet does not comment on whether or when a matter has been considered by the Cabinet or its committees.