

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
Additional Estimates 2015 - 2016

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

**Department/Agency:** Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

**Outcome/Program:** Outcome 1: Prime Minister and Cabinet

**Topic:** Statement of Ministerial Standards – the former Assistant Minister for Defence

**Senator:** Conroy, Stephen

**Question reference number:** 26

**Type of question:** FPA Monday 8 February 2016, page 126

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** 14 September 2016

**Number of pages:** 2

**Question:**

Senator CONROY: Did he indicate he was planning to travel to China?

Ms E Kelly: It was certainly a request for personal leave. As to the details of it, I will seek to get some further detail on that.

Senator CONROY: Could we also clarify if there is a record of any discussions with Mr Robert about what was the purpose? So it is not just 'Was it in the letter?' Were people in the then Prime Minister's office aware of why he was seeking leave?

Ms E Kelly: I will take that on notice.

...

Senator CONROY: I am just seeking some information which I think will be taken on notice. Will you provide to the committee the letter that Minister Robert wrote to former Prime Minister Abbott seeking leave?

Senator WONG: I have asked for that.

Senator CONROY: We have asked for that? And any other documentation between him and the PMO on why he wanted to leave.

Ms E Kelly: I have taken that on notice, Senator Conroy.

Senator CONROY: You won't commit to give it to us though?

Ms E Kelly: I have taken it on notice, Senator Conroy.

**Answer:**

A copy of Mr Robert's letter to the then Prime Minister, the Hon Tony Abbott MP, requesting personal leave in August 2014, is attached.



**The Hon Stuart Robert MP  
Assistant Minister for Defence**

The Hon Tony Abbott MHR  
Prime Minister  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister

I write to seek your consent to my taking Personal Leave from 15-22 August (inclusive).

It is my belief that this timing will cause the least disruption as it falls outside of Parliamentary Sittings and occurs prior to key periods of activity related to the delivery of my portfolio outcomes.

Whilst on leave it is my intention to travel overseas to China (Hong Kong and Beijing), Israel (Tel Aviv) and Croatia (Dubrovnik).

The Minister for Defence, Senator the Hon David Johnston, has advised his availability to act on my behalf during my absence.

Yours sincerely

Stuart Robert

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