

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Additional Estimates 2016 - 2017

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
Outcome/Program: Outcome 1: Prime Minister and Cabinet
Topic: SDG 5

Senator: Moore, Claire

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Question:

SDG 5 contains a target, 5.c: Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.

The indicator identified to track this is 5.c.1: Proportion of countries with systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment.

The UN Statistics Division's guide to the SDG indicators

(<https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/files/metadata-compilation/Metadata-Goal-5.pdf>) states:

[Indicator 5.c.1] seeks to measure government efforts to track budget allocations and actual expenditures for gender equality throughout the public financial management cycle and to make these publically available. The system should be led by the Minister of Finance in collaboration with the sectoral ministries and the National Women's Machineries and overseen by an appropriate body such as Parliament or Public Auditors.

Criteria used to determine whether such a system is in place include:

- i. Whether or not there are guidelines such as call circulars or directives that provide guidance on gender responsive budget allocations?
- ii. Whether or not there is a gender budget statement?
- iii. Whether or not an ex ante gender impact assessment of the budget allocation is conducted?
- iv. Whether or not an assessment is conducted of how budget allocations are spend?

1. Are any of the criteria outlined by the UN Statistics Division to monitor indicator 5.c.1 currently in place in the Commonwealth Government?

2. Has the Office for Women met with the Department of Finance or the Treasury to discuss measures needed for Australia to achieve Target 5.c?

3. The response to The response to PM56 from Supplementary Budget Estimates, October 2016, about the next steps the government is taking to meet the 50% target for women on government boards, stated: “The Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet is considering options which would require nominating bodies to explain the appointment of a man if they are failing to meet their targets”.

a. Has the Department reached a conclusion on this consideration?

4. At the October 20176 Supplementary Estimates, Ms McIntyre said (pg. 140 of transcript) that “the Office for Women has recently taken over responsibility from the Treasury for the response to the Senate inquiry ‘A husband is not a retirement plan”.

a. Which departments are the Office for Women working with to develop the Government’s response to the inquiry?

b. When will the Government’s response to the inquiry be released?

Answer:

1. The Government notes the guidance of the United Nations Statistics Division.

The Office for Women moved back into the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) in 2013 to achieve a whole-of-government approach to women’s policy, ensuring impacts on women are known and considered across Government policy making. As part of that function, the Office for Women regularly provides advice on gender issues and analysis to other Commonwealth Departments.

2. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and PM&C are leading a coordinated, whole-of-government approach to how Australia gives effect to the 2030 Agenda, domestically and internationally.

Ms Lin Hatfield Dodds, Deputy Secretary, Social Policy (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet) co-chairs the Deputy-Secretary level inter-departmental committee (IDC).

The Office for Women works through this IDC to progress SDG goal five (‘achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls’).

The Department of Finance and the Treasury are critical members of the SDG IDC.

The Office for Women will work through the SDG IDC to discuss measures needed for Australia to achieve SDG Target 5.c.

3. The next public report on the gender balance of Government boards will list all nominating bodies and detail the gender balance of their nominations.

4. The Office for Women is currently coordinating the response across the Treasury, the Department of Social Services, the Department of Employment, and the Attorney-General’s Department and a response will be tabled in due course.