

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates 26 May-6 June 2014

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Outcome/Program: 1.1 Prime Minister and Cabinet

Topic: Overseas travel by NSIP staff delegations

Senator: Senator Sam Dastyari

Question reference number: 54

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Question:

Senator DASTYARI: Perhaps you can take this on notice. In the past, let us say from 2007, are you able to say how many delegations there have been where someone from your team and the national security team have actually been?

Senator Abetz: Was that in 2007? We will do our best.

Answer:

National Security and International Policy (NSIP) Group staff represent the Department on a range of policy issues including foreign, trade and development assistance; cyber policy, including cyber security; national security information sharing and management; intelligence; defence operations and support; border protection; counter-terrorism and crisis management.

Providing information going back to 2007 would involve an unreasonable diversion of departmental resources. However, by way of example, for the 2013-14 financial year staff from NSIP have participated in 15 delegations to international meetings without the Prime Minister.

Since September 2011, when Dr Margot McCarthy, Associate Secretary NSIP, began acting as the then National Security Adviser, she has participated in seven delegations to international meetings without the Prime Minister, including Australia–US and Australia–UK Ministerial consultations.