

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

Budget Estimates – May 2014

ANSWER TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Prime Minister and Cabinet portfolio

Department/Agency: Office of the Official Secretary to the Governor-General

Program 1: Support for the Governor-General and Official Activities

Outcome 1: The performance of the Governor-General's role is facilitated through the organisation and management of official duties, management and maintenance of the official household and property and administration of the Australian Honours and Awards system.

Topic: Executive Council papers for 18 Sept 2013 meeting

Senator: Wong

Question reference number: QoN 8

Type of Question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 11 July 2014

Number of Pages: 2

Senator Wong: Therefore, the ExCo papers were received before Mr Abbott became Prime Minister.

Mr Fraser: That may well be the case, but the papers were received that morning. There is probably no benefit in me speculating, not having been at that meeting.

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Senator Wong: There is no minister at the table, for obvious reasons. Why are you taking it on notice?

Mr Fraser: I would be very happy to take it on notice so that I can check the sequencing of the paperwork that day. I know that the papers were received that day because I have that information from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. They may be able to better inform you about when those papers were passed across when they come before you tomorrow.

Senator Wong: Who would know, from your end, when those papers were received?

Mr Fraser: I would have to check with administrative staff in the department who would have received the papers.

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Senator Wong: What are you taking on notice, then?

Mr Fraser: To find out at what time the papers were received at Government House on the morning of the 18th.

Answer:

Unsigned papers were brought to Government House by the Secretary of the Executive Council at approximately 08:30 ahead of a special Executive Council meeting to be held following the

swearing-in of the Prime Minister. Signed documents were presented to the Governor-General at the Executive Council meeting by the Ministers in attendance.