

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: Ministerial order of precedence – non-publication

Senator: Senator Jacinta Collins

Question reference number: 98

Type of Question: FPA, Tuesday 27 May 2014, page 109

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

Number of pages: 1

Question:

Senator JACINTA COLLINS: The first issue is the purpose for the order of precedence. First up there were the answers that you gave, Minister, that the department indicated were essentially their understanding but at this stage could not supplement but have taken it on notice to see if there were other factors. The next issue, though, was, with respect to the order of precedence, why it needed to be confidential, to which Ms Kelly confidently asserted was historic and which Senator Faulkner has disputed.

Senator Abetz: We will take on notice whether it is or was historic and will get back to you in relation to that.

Senator JACINTA COLLINS: I am just interested in why the department was so confident about the historic nature of the order of precedence but was not in the position to outline its historic purpose, but maybe it is that egos in the current government are a bit fragile.

CHAIR: It has been taken on notice, Senator Collins.

Answer:

It is the Department's understanding that the practice of successive governments has been to not publicly release the order of precedence.