

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates Hearing 25-29 May 2015

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
Outcome/Program: Outcome 1: Prime Minister and Cabinet
Topic: Future Submarine's Project

Senator: Senator the Hon Stephen Conroy

Question reference number: 28

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Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 9 June 2015

Number of pages: 2

Question:

Senator CONROY: During Mr Costello's tenure as chief of staff, did he provide any briefs, submissions or other information to the department, the Prime Minister, or the Prime Minister's office about Australia's future submarine project?

Senator Cormann: I would have to take that question on notice.

...

Senator CONROY: Good. I would like to turn to his role as CEO of DCNS Australia. In his current role, had Mr Costello had any meetings with officials from the department, representatives from the Prime Minister's office or with the Prime Minister or other cabinet or portfolio ministers?

...

Senator Cormann: I would have to take that on notice; I am not personally aware.

...

Senator CONROY: So he has not has any meetings with you?

Senator Cormann: He has not had any meetings with me; I can tell you that.

Senator CONROY: If there were any meetings, could you indicate when they occurred, who attended and/or participated and what the nature of those interactions was. Senator Cormann: We will take that on notice.

Senator CONROY: Is the department aware of Mr Costello meeting with officials from the Department of the Prime Minister of Cabinet, representatives of the PM's office or with the PM or other cabinet minister portfolios to discuss the future submarine project?

Ms Kelly: I am not aware, Senator, but we will take it on notice.

Answer:

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) was not provided with any briefs, submissions or other information about Australia's future submarine project from Mr Costello during his tenure as chief of staff.

An official from PM&C, Mr Steve McFarlane, met with Mr Costello on 7 May 2015. The purpose of the meeting was for Mr Costello to introduce himself, as Chief Executive Officer of DCNS Australia.

Mr Costello had conversations with representatives of the Prime Minister's office on a range of matters in his capacity as the Minister for Defence's chief of staff.