

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: Whitepaper on Northern Australia

Senator: Senator the Hon Jan McLucas

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Question:

Senator McLUCAS: Thank you. Were the Queensland, Northern Territory and Western Australian governments advised of the budget announcement of the facility prior to the budget being announced?

Mr McDonald: I am not aware of them being advised.

Senator McLUCAS: You are not aware. Would it be you I should ask or should I ask that question of Treasury?

Ms Cross: I think there is usually a letter to premiers on budget night outlining the major measures. In my recollection, it is co-signed by the Prime Minister and the Treasurer. That may well have gone to this matter in the versions that went to those premiers.

Senator McLUCAS: But you would have to take that on notice, right?

Answer:

The Western Australia, Northern Territory and Queensland Governments were informed of the Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility prior to the Budget being announced. The letters from the Prime Minister and Treasurer sent to the northern jurisdictions on Budget night included the following text: "The Commonwealth looks forward to working with you to progress much needed infrastructure as part of the Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility. Under this facility the Commonwealth will provide concessional loans to support infrastructure in Australia's north. The facility will open for applications from 1 July 2015".