

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
BUDGET ESTIMATES 2016-17

Finance Portfolio
5 May 2016

Department/Agency: Department of Finance

Outcome/Program: 3/3.1

Topic: *Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984* - staffing for parliamentarians not affiliated with a political party

Senator: Bernardi

Question reference number: F17

Type of question: Hansard Proof, F&PA Committee, Page 66, 5 May 2016

Date set by the Senate for the return of answer: Wednesday, 14 September 2016

Number of pages: 1

Question:

CHAIR: I have a genuine question in relation to this table, and it is something I have noticed in the Senate things as well. I have been going through the 'personal positions for parliamentarians not affiliated with a major political party', and on a separate page it has a 'recognised party', the Glenn Lazarus Team. What is the significance? Even though there is no significant difference in positions, why are they categorised as different—for example, Senator Bob Day from Family First versus a 'recognised party'?

Senator Cormann: I will have to take that on notice ...

Answer:

Part III of the *Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984* (MOP(S) Act) enables an *office holder* to employ staff.

An *office holder* includes the holder of a *relevant office* as defined at section 3.

Relevant office is defined at section 3 to include *an office of leader or deputy leader, in a House of the Parliament, of a recognised political party*. Ministers, Parliamentary Secretaries and the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Opposition in each House of the Parliament are also relevant offices.

Senator Lazarus identified himself to the Senate as the Leader of the Glenn Lazarus Team and thus held a relevant office under the MOP(S) Act.

Senators and Members who are allocated personal employee positions, but who do not hold a relevant office, are empowered to employ these staff under Part III through a determination under section 12.