

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: Mr Damien Mantach – alleged misappropriation of funds – provision of details and advice

Senator: Wong

Question reference number: F20

Type of question: Hansard Proof, F&PA Committee, Pages 75-76, 5 May 2016

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

Number of pages: 1

Question:

Senator WONG: I want to give you the opportunity to correct me if I am wrong. Should I understand your evidence to be that the lawyers were not prepared to give you the details you requested until the criminal trial was resolved?

Ms Halton: I was not party to those conversations, so I need to be careful about how I answer that. It may well be that I do not have all the facts. I am happy to check the facts for you.

...

Senator WONG: Can someone tell me what reason they have indicated? I get that you have your own internal advice et cetera. I am asking what reason was provided by these bodies.

Ms Halton: That I cannot answer here. I would have to take that on notice because I was not party to those conversations.

Senator WONG: Is anybody who was able to tell us?

Ms Halton: I will have to come back on notice on this.

Answer:

On 28 August 2015, the Department of Finance (Finance) returned the cheque and sought additional information, particularly in regard to the calculation of the quantum of overpayments from Hope Earle.

Hope Earle subsequently advised it had not been able to obtain the information requested by Finance from Melbourne Mailing and suggested that the Department contact Melbourne Mailing directly to seek information.

That was not considered appropriate at that time given the ongoing criminal matter.

On 21 September 2016, Finance received a voluntary repayment from the Victorian Liberal Party for amounts overcharged by Melbourne Mailing. This matter is now finalised.