

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2016 - 2017

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
Outcome/Program: Outcome 1: Prime Minister and Cabinet
Topic: Media coverage – classified document

Senator: Wong, Penny

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Question:

Senator WONG: Dr Parkinson has been on the public record about the importance of not politicising Treasury, Finance et cetera. He is the head of the public service. I would like to know: is he not concerned in any way given his past statements at the provision of a document headed 'protected sensitive cabinet' to a journalist? I presume you would want to take that on notice.

Ms Kelly: I will.

Senator WONG: And I would like to know how consistent with his past practice as a secretary to not initiate some form of inquiry about such a leak being used for political purposes. I mean, this is a document produced 'protected cabinet sensitive' which has been made public—and I do not think that is disputed—for political purposes. It politicises the public sector and it politicises Treasury and Finance—

Answer:

Dr Parkinson was made aware of above incident shortly after the Estimates hearing. He then conducted an inquiry into the source of the document and how it came to be released to a member of the public.