

# Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

## ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

### BUDGET ESTIMATES 2017-18

#### Finance Portfolio

24-25 May 2017

**Department/Agency:** Finance

**Outcome/Program:** 2/2.1

**Topic:** Decentralisation agenda and scope

**Senator:** Gallagher

**Question reference number:** F30

**Type of question:** Hansard Proof, 24 May 2017, F&PA Committee, Page 89

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** Friday, 7 July 2017

**Number of pages:** 1

#### Question:

**Senator GALLAGHER:** So the decision to have these plans and business cases returned by entities who are potentially going to be relocated was a cabinet decision as well?

**Senator Cormann:** It is. That is right.

**Senator GALLAGHER:** It all went through. So, presumably, there was consultation with agencies, submissions, consideration of advice to ministers, discussions—

**Senator Cormann:** It went through the appropriate process, yes.

**Senator GALLAGHER:** Is there department in charge of it?

**Senator Cormann:** Well, the portfolio in charge is Infrastructure and Regional Development.

**Senator GALLAGHER:** Okay, so they have overall carriage of it.

**Senator Cormann:** Yes, that is right. Our involvement is as I have previously outlined.

**Senator GALLAGHER:** And it is non-policy areas, so what is in scope and what is out of scope for this?

**Senator Cormann:** I think you are inviting us to pre-empt decisions here.

**Senator GALLAGHER:** Well, you are saying it is only—

**Senator Cormann:** That is right.

**Senator GALLAGHER:** It must be non-policy areas—must be exempt based on what you said.

**Senator Cormann:** Yes. And we will take on notice to see whether we can provide you with a list of relevant examples.

**Senator GALLAGHER:** Okay. Presumably, the exempt areas are not having to put together any advice to Senator Nash on how and whether they could move.

**Senator Cormann:** Areas that are clearly not suitable for this program.

**Senator GALLAGHER:** Can you give me those?

**Senator Cormann:** I have already taken it on notice.

#### Answer:

The Government's Decentralisation Program is prioritising the decentralisation of non-policy Commonwealth entities and functions to regional areas. Under the decentralisation policy, Ministers will undertake a structured process to investigate the potential to move Government jobs outside of Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne.

The scope of non-policy entities excludes departments of State, such as the Department of Finance, the Treasury and the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Initial decisions on resulting relocations are expected in the 2018-19 budget context.

Decentralisation of appropriate non-policy entities and functions will be decided based on consistent criteria. Several key criteria are set out at page 4 of Budget Paper 4, 2017-18.