

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: 2/2.5

Topic: Cabinet Service Delivery and Coordination Committee

Senator: Farrell

Question reference number: F80

Type of question: Hansard Proof, 25 May 2017, F&PA Committee, page 79

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

Number of pages: 2

Question:

Senator FARRELL: I understand that in addition to the Independent Communications Committee there is a cabinet Service Delivery and Coordination Committee that oversees government advertising. Is that correct?

Senator Ryan: If you put your questions on notice, I will get them answered through PM&C, because all cabinet procedural questions, within the rules of what is disclosed and otherwise, are the responsibility of Prime Minister and Cabinet. I am happy to take the questions on notice.

...

Senator FARRELL: Okay. My first question, then, is: is there a cabinet Service Delivery and Coordination Committee that oversees government advertising? Is that correct?

Senator Ryan: I am happy to take—

Senator FARRELL: No, I understand: you will take it on notice.

...

Senator McKENZIE: The committee is taking on notice whether it exists.

Senator FARRELL: Yes.

Senator FARRELL: I have been here a while with Senator McKenzie, and she knows that to be true. In May 2016, Senator Cormann said it was chaired by Christopher Pyne. Can you tell us why the chair was changed? My next question is: when did the chair of this committee change? Did Minister Pyne resign from that position voluntarily? Minister Dutton has said that people should not read news from certain news outlets. Is this the sort of person who should be leading the government's advertising campaign? Do you believe the bias of the minister is an issue? And finally, Minister Dutton said that Fairfax was waging a jihad on the government. Do you think that sort of mentality is appropriate to a person leading the government's advertising campaign? That completes my list of questions on notice, and that completes my questions on the current outcome.

Answer:

The department sought advice from the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C), who have responsibility for Cabinet matters and they have advised that there is a Service Delivery and Co-ordination Committee of Cabinet (SDCC). Details of the membership, including the chair, are publicly available via the www.directory.gov.au website.

The membership of the SDCC, including its chair, was revised in September 2016 following the 2016 Election. Minister Dutton has been the chair of SDCC since September 2016. As set out in the 10th Edition of the Cabinet Handbook, the Prime Minister is responsible for the membership of the Cabinet and Cabinet committees.