

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates 18-22 November 2013

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Outcome/Program: 1.1 Prime Minister and Cabinet

Topic: Secretaries committees

Senator: Senator the Hon Penny Wong

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Type of Question: Written

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Number of pages: 3

Question:

Does the Secretary of PM&C chair any secretaries committees? If so, please provide the details of each committee including (a) terms of reference/role (b) membership and (c) reporting arrangements?

Answer:

The Secretary of PM&C currently chairs the following Secretaries' committees as detailed below.

The Committees provide advice to the Ministers and Departments. There are no formal reporting arrangements for the committees.

Secretaries' Committee on Indigenous Reform

The role of this committee is to consider strategies to improve the effectiveness of Government programmes and initiatives to address Indigenous disadvantage, with a particular focus on the key priority areas of getting children into school, getting adults into work, economic development and community safety. The Committee also monitors the progress of Indigenous programmes.

The Committee comprises the Secretary of PM&C as Chair, and includes the Secretaries of the Departments of Treasury, Finance, Employment, Education, Health, the Attorney-General's, Social Services, Infrastructure and Regional Development, Human Services, Industry and Environment, with Secretaries of other Departments co-opted as necessary.

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Secretaries' Committee on Northern Australia

The role of this committee is to provide strategic oversight and advice on issues affecting the development of Northern Australia, and in particular facilitate collaboration across Government in the development of the White Paper.

The Committee comprises the Secretary of PM&C as Chair, and includes Secretaries from the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development (who also co-chairs); the Treasury; Finance; Agriculture; Foreign Affairs and Trade; Industry; and the Environment.

Secretaries' Committee on Social Policy

The role of this committee is to:

- share information and perspectives on policies and programs to build individual, community and social well-being;
- support, where needed, the Cabinet and relevant committees of Cabinet;
- monitor progress in high priority cross-portfolio areas;
- consider major social policy budget items; and,
- deliver clear direction across government agencies in the development of policy advice and implementation of programmes.

The Committee comprises the Secretary of PM&C as Chair and includes Secretaries from the Departments of the Treasury, Finance, Attorney-Generals, Health, Human Services, Social Services, Employment and Education with Secretaries of other Departments co-opted as necessary.

Secretaries' Committee on Deregulation

The role of this committee is to provide advice on the policy design and implementation of the Government's deregulation agenda.

The Committee comprises the Secretary of PM&C as Chair, and the Secretaries of the Departments of the Treasury, Agriculture, Attorney-General's, Environment, Health and Communications. Secretaries of other Departments are invited to attend as required.

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Secretaries' Committee on National Security

The role of this committee is to provide co-ordinated advice to the National Security Committee of Cabinet (NSC) on national security policy, including approaches to international strategic developments and major issues of long-term relevance to Australia's economic, political, trade and defence interests, particularly when those interests interact. SCNS also provides co-ordinated advice to NSC on the activities of departments and agencies in connection with intelligence and domestic security matters.

The Committee comprises the Secretary of PM&C as Chair; the Associate Secretary National Security and International Policy Group, PM&C; the Secretaries of the Departments of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Defence, Treasury, and Immigration and Border Protection; the Chief of the Defence Forces; the Directors-General of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation, the Office of National Assessments, and the Australian Secret Intelligence Service; the Chief Executive Officers of Australian Customs and Border Protection Service and Australian Crime Commission; and the Australian Federal Police Commissioner.