

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Supplementary Budget Estimates 20-24 October 2014

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
Outcome/Program: Outcome 1: Prime Minister and Cabinet
Topic: UN Security Council Resolution 2177 on Ebola - consultation

Senator: Senator the Hon Penny Wong

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Question:

Senator WONG: Were you consulted on UN Security Council Resolution 2177 on Ebola?

Dr McCarthy: We were.

Senator WONG: It is a lengthy resolution, which includes—and we voted for this:

Calls on Member States to provide urgent resources and assistance, including deployable medical capabilities such as field hospitals with qualified and sufficient expertise, staff and supplies ... Urges Member States ... to mobilize and provide immediately technical expertise and additional medical capacity ...

It goes on and on. Was the department aware of what was included in this resolution before Australia voted for it?

Dr McCarthy: My colleague advises me that we would have been consulted on the draft. Whether we would have been consulted on the final text—these things can be negotiated right up until the last moment. We would have been consulted on the draft, but I would need to take on notice whether we were consulted on the final text, and it is not necessarily the case that we would have been.

Answer:

The Department was consulted on the draft text of UN Security Council Resolution 2177. The final text was negotiated through the Australian Mission to the United Nations in New York.