

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Supplementary Budget Estimates 19-23 October 2015

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
Outcome/Program: Outcome 1: Prime Minister and Cabinet
Topic: Minister Assisting the Prime Minister on Counter-Terrorism

Senator: Senator the Hon Penny Wong

Question reference number: 110

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 4 December 2015

Number of pages: 2

Question:

When was Mr Keenan appointed Minister Assisting the Prime Minister on Counter-Terrorism.

Was he sworn to administer PM&C.

Did he receive a charter letter outlining Mr Abbott's expectations of him in this portfolio.

If yes, when, and can a copy be provided to the committee.

If not, why not.

Can Mr Keenan's role be outlined, please.

Has Mr Turnbull made any changes to Mr Keenan's role.

How many decision briefs has PM&C sent to Mr Keenan since his appointment.

Answer:

1. On 25 May 2015, the former Prime Minister, the Hon Tony Abbott MP, announced that the Minister for Justice, the Hon Michael Keenan MP, would take on a new role as Minister Assisting the Prime Minister on Counter-Terrorism.
2. On 28 May 2015, the Hon Michael Keenan MP was sworn to administer the Attorney-General's Department and the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.
3. The former Prime Minister, the Hon Tony Abbott MP, and the Prime Minister, the Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP, both provided charter letters to Ministers within the Prime Minister and Cabinet portfolio. The charter letters set out the priorities to be met in

the term of Government and ask for a number of matters to be brought forward for Cabinet consideration. It is a longstanding convention that the nature and content of the charter letters are not disclosed to maintain Cabinet confidentiality.

4. As the Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Counter-Terrorism, the Hon Michael Keenan MP, is responsible for leading the Government's efforts in countering violent extremism and supporting the Prime Minister and the Attorney-General in ensuring close and effective coordination of the Government's counter-terrorism efforts. Mr Turnbull has not made any changes to Mr Keenan's role as the Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Counter-Terrorism.
5. As at 25 November 2015, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet had provided Mr Keenan a range of briefing to support his role as Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Counter-Terrorism.